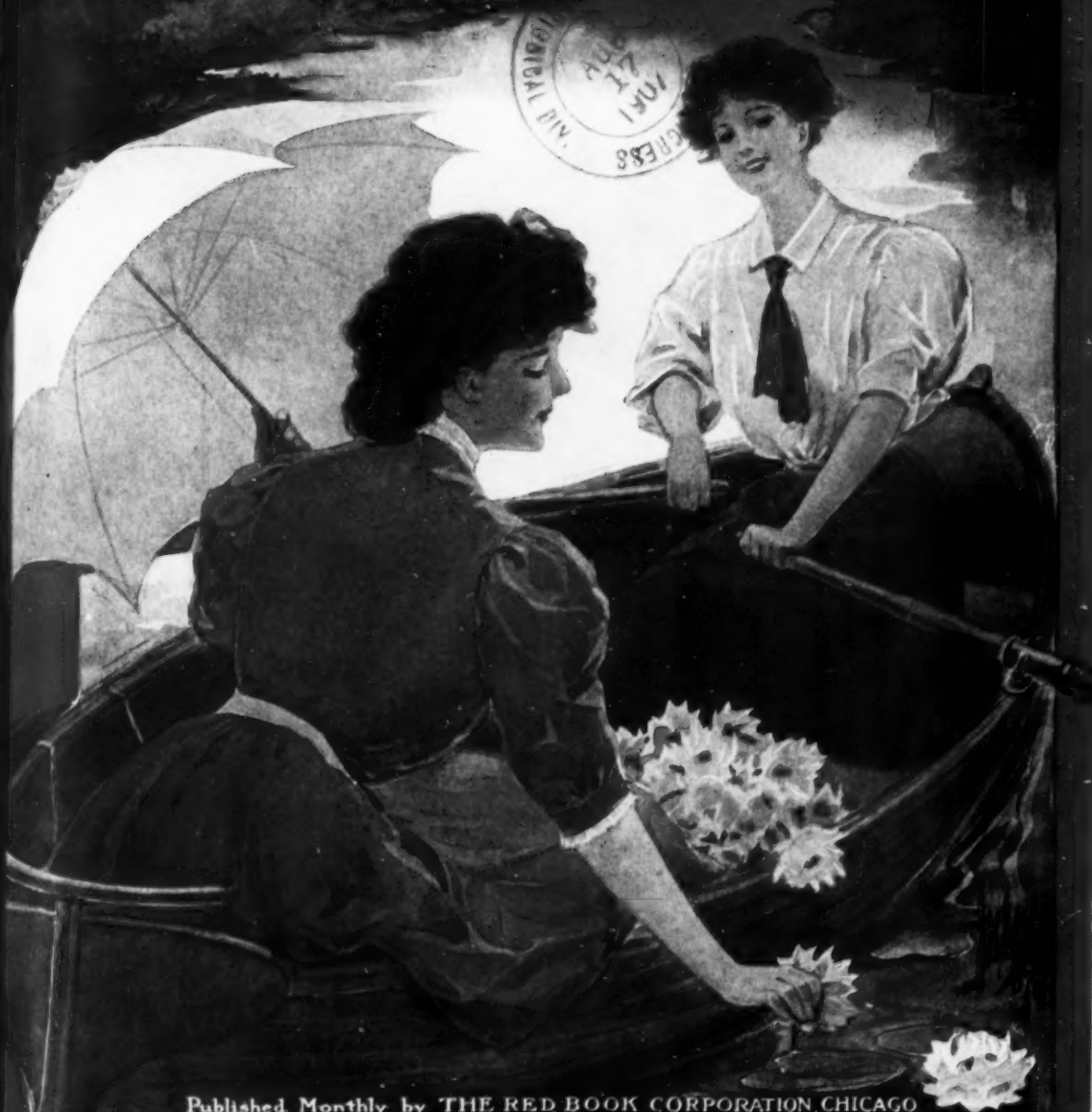


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SEPTEMBER 1907

— THE —  
**RED BOOK**  
MAGAZINE



Published Monthly by THE RED BOOK CORPORATION, CHICAGO  
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SKELTON MCRAE'S LOT BY CLARA E. LAUGH



**C/B**

**À LA SPIRITE  
CORSETS**

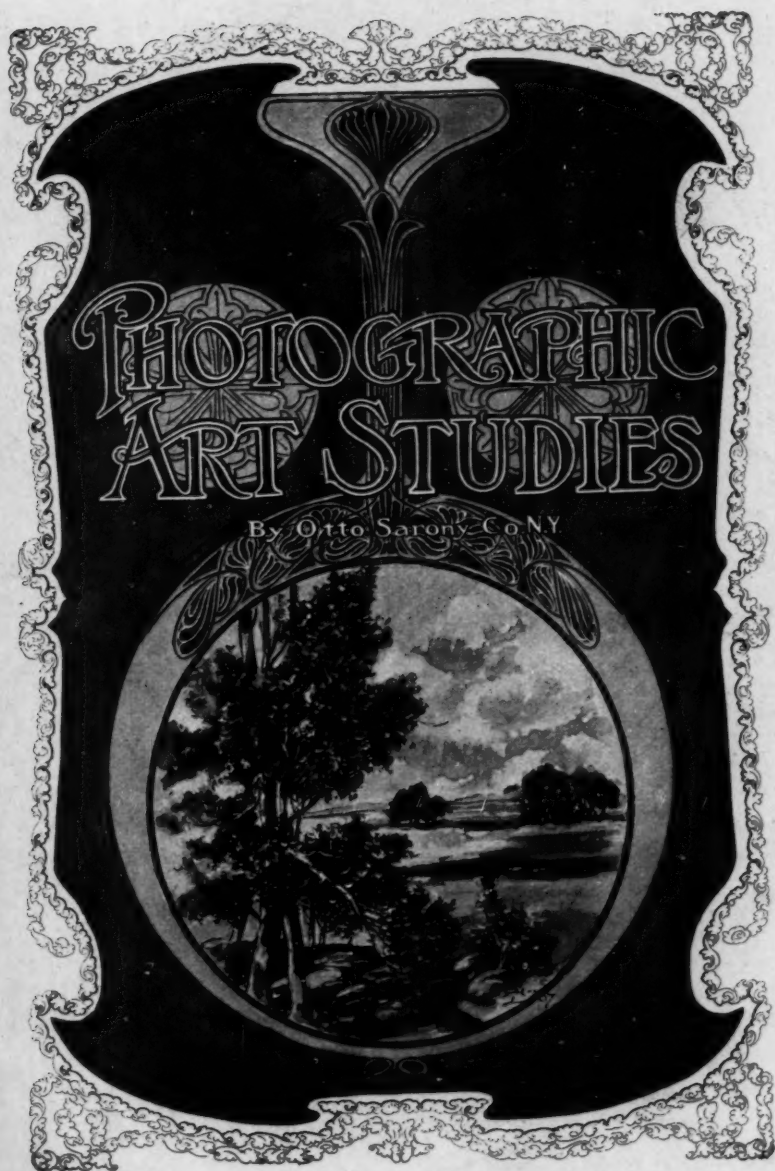
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DRAWN BY F. DE FORREST SCHOOK

A bold scout among the rats ventured out

—See "Skelton McBae's Lot"

# THE RED BOOK

## MAGAZINE

Vol. IX

September, 1907

No. 5

### Skelton McBrae's Lot

BY CLARA E. LAUGHLIN

Author of "Felicity," etc.

SEVEN or eight dollars for roses, to freeze in half an hour in this beastly cold, seems kind o' foolish in the circumstances, doesn't it?"

Carter Howard looked up from the pile of halves and quarters he was counting and read affirmation in the faces of those few "boys" who had time to stand interestedly by and learn the results of the "hat-passing."

"I bet he feels as much irony as gratitude," observed Carpenter, who had, like Lewer, married very young and seen more than a fair share of anxiety about making ends meet.

"Dying's an awful extravagance," sighed Riley O'Donnell, with no intent to be irreverent. "No one ought to indulge in it without making sure the family can afford a funeral. There's the coffin-trust, and the undertakers'-trust, and the funeral-hack-trust, and the rich corporations that own the only places the law'll allow you to bury dead folks; and when folks are dead the law obliges you to bury 'em, whether you can afford to or not."

No one laughed, because everyone knew O'Donnell was deeply serious, as only the usually comical can ever be.

"Seems to me it'd be a lot better to buy the—the baby a bunch of lilies of the valley to hold in its—er—little hand, and send the rest o' this, and any more we can spare, to poor Lewer, to help him through."

Again Howard read affirmation in the faces around him, and the hat was re-passed.

"He might not like to take the money," Carpenter demurred.

"He's got to take it!" O'Donnell announced, with decision. "This is no time for a man to act squeamish or think of 'charity.' And, Heavens! this isn't charity; it's only what we ought to do, or part of it. Of course we all told the kid that space-work averaging eighteen dollars a week was nothing to get married on, let alone to bury babies on; but I guess we all kind of admired his nerve in trying it. Anyway, there he is, and here we are, and that's all there is to it. Hush! here comes the Skelton. Don't say anything to him. He'll want to give, and he's got nothing, poor old beggar!"

But the sudden silence as "the Skelton" approached was tell-tale.

"Here, kittie, kittie!" he called. "Might 's well let her out, boys; I can hear her squealin'."

They laughed at his feeble and ancient pleasantry and tried to divert his attention, but he caught sight of the heap of small coin before Howard.

"Much obliged!" He swept them as profound a bow as his rotundity would permit, and reached a fat hand toward the money. "This comes in awful handy, boys," he said, with feigned hoarseness of emotion; "you may not believe it possible of a careful financier like me, but I'm—broke!"

"Yet, or again?" asked O'Donnell, with good-natured sarcasm.

"Yet," was the chuckling answer.

Then, seeing there was no help for it, they told him how word had just reached the office that Lewer's baby was dead, and how they were trying to help out.

"Poor kid!" McBrae felt vaguely in his pockets for a handkerchief which he had, evidently, no great expectation of finding, then frankly wiped his brimming eyes with the back of his pudgy hand.

"My first baby died when I was in the Columbus pen, with the Morgan raiders," he went on, reminiscently. "I cried myself sick about it, when the news came. Funny! how a man can learn to face all the music of war and never flinch, how he can be locked up as a holy-terror and the country can give thanks to have him behind iron bars, and yet how he can cry his heart out about his baby. Some o' the other homesick fellows cried with me, too, an' I never forgot it. No, sir! you never forget the people that've cried with you."

The younger men looked dubious; any one of them would rather, almost, have yielded up his body to be burned, than cry with any one, but Skelton McBrae knew they'd get over that. The only thing the boys didn't like about the genial old "skeleton," as they called him, was his habit of shaking his big head at them and twinkling his small, pale eyes, as he foretold what softening of stiff fibers the passing of the years would bring.

Before he had time to chide them to-day, though, Lewer came in, and every man in the little group, except McBrae took on instantly a look of panic and began furtively to plan a quick escape. Not one of them felt equal to facing Lewer and saying "I'm sorry." The boy, whom all had patronized and bullied and advised and "kidded," was set terribly aloof by a sorrow, by a touch of the Mystery. They were all awkwardly dumb in his presence.

"Tell you what," said Howard, shamefacedly, when they had made their escape, "'t isn't hard-heartedness that—that makes lots o' folks pass by on the other side and pretend not to see the man in the ditch, it's a faint-heartedness—not knowin' how in the deuce to face him—often's not."

But the Skeleton's eyes brimmed again at sight of the boy's face, set with its piteously youthful repression, and laying a hand on the slim shoulder—so slim for this burden—he murmured, "Terribly sorry, sonny."

Lewer's shoulder shook. Then, with one glance at the fat face with its tear-filled

eyes, he dropped into a chair, stretched his arms upon the table before him, and buried his quivering face in them.

The other fellows melted away, retreating ingloriously from a situation they could not hold; even O'Donnell the fearless, whose dare-deviltry as correspondent in half a dozen wars was one of the most-prized legends of newspaperdom. The presence of a boy crying over his baby's death came as near to creating consternation in this busy room as anything that had ever happened in its eventful history.

McBrae said nothing for a few moments. Then Lewer, looking up, began to apologize.

"I haven't slept for three nights," he said, "and worked right along in the daytime, and I'm worn out."

"Don't try to explain," begged McBrae; "'t isn't weakness makes you cry, my boy, it's strength; a weak man would be afraid to cry. I've seen strong men under a good many kinds o' stress, in my day, and I've learned to respect men's tears. Why, after Sedan, I remember—"

And, talking of other days, he gave the boy time to recover himself. Then he asked very gently.

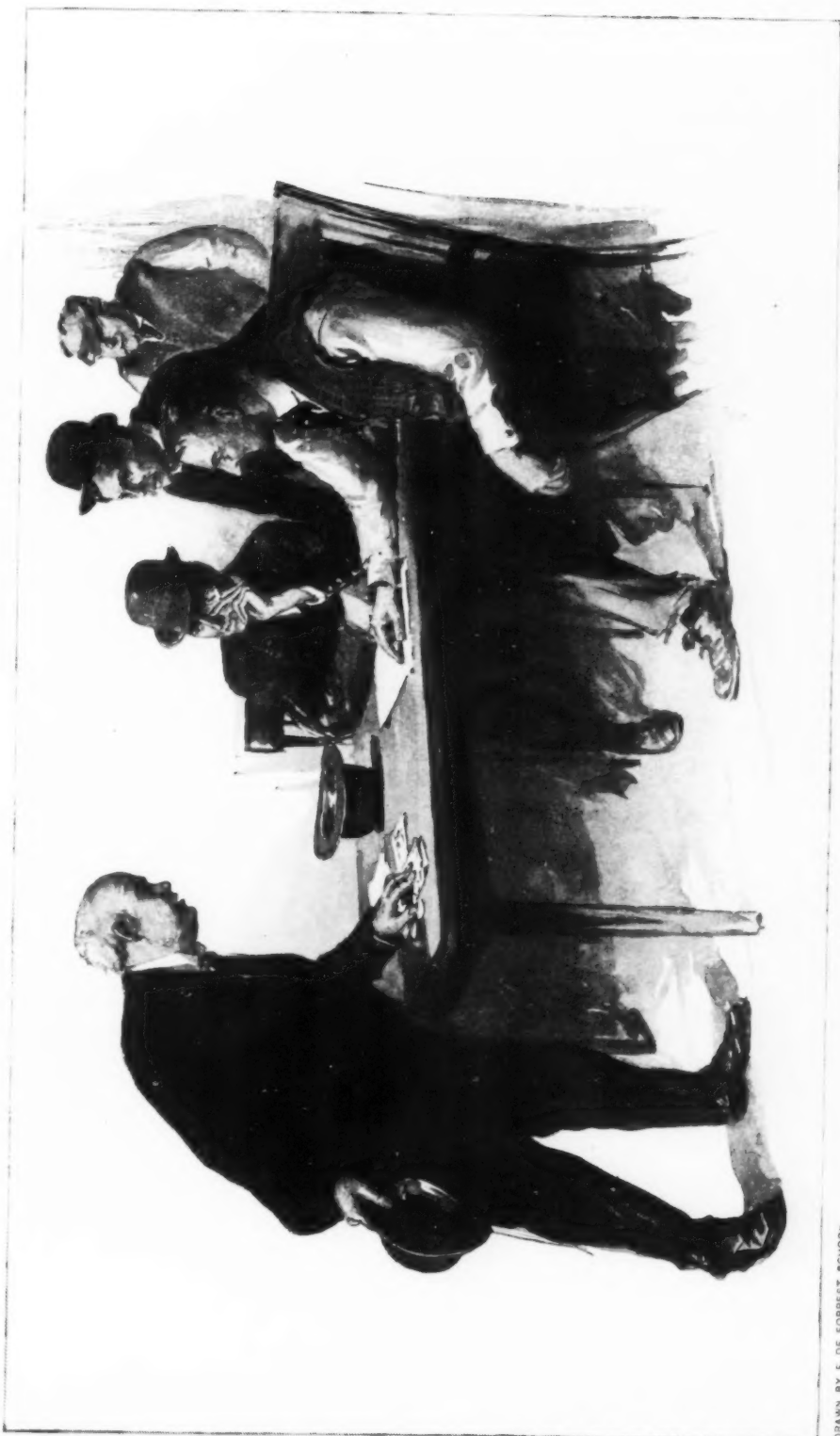
"Got any place to—to put her?"

Lewer shook his head. "I came down to see if the chief wouldn't let me draw a little in advance, so I can buy a—place."

"People don't naturally think, when everything's goin' well, of providin' for times like this, do they?" McBrae suggested.

"No," bitterly, "I guess not—most of us."

"I know. But the only investment I ever managed to make was a—a place to lie in when time's up, here. Curious! I've never owned a roof over my head, or even aspired to; but one time, about twenty years ago, I got to thinking I wanted to make sure of a place to lie in till the trump sounds. I guess I figured, from the way things were goin', that the millenium's a long way off, and I kind o' wanted to know where I was likely to be, all that time. I don't care much about a place to live—I've lived all over Kingdom Come and one place's pretty near's good's another, to me. But when I die, I want to 'stay put,' and so, here about twenty years ago, hap-



DRAWN BY F. DE FORREST SCHOOK

McBrae reached a fat hand toward the money

pening to make an unexpected five hundred—you could guess, maybe, that any five hundred I got must 'a' been unexpected—I told my wife I was goin' to buy a burial-lot.

"'Skelt McBrae,' she says, 'you're plum crazy! I always suspected as much, an' now I know it. Here we are, needin' every necessity of life, and you want to blow in all that money on a burial-lot which we don't need and aint likely to—dyin' bein' reserved for the young an' joyous and them that don't want to go, it would seem, an' not for the likes of us.'

"But I went ahead an' bought it, just the same. It was the first time I'd been real set on a thing—and the last time—and I gave Nancy a hundred o' that money to spend on what she called the necessities of life, and the rest I took for the necessities of death, which are a good deal necessaryer, because it isn't necessary to live—though some folks think it is—and it's terrible necessary for everybody to die. So I bought a nice lot, with room in it for twelve graves, and put a curbing at the foot of it, towards the roadway, and got a nice stone step with 'McBRAE' on it; an' Sundays an' holidays, at first, I used to go out there an' look at it, and feel awful satisfied. Nancy couldn't see what I wanted o' twelve graves—none o' our folks livin' here an' our two babies buried, one in Kentucky, and the other in New Orleans in a thing like an oven with a wreath of glass beads hangin' on the oven door—but I said we couldn't tell how we might need 'em, and if we didn't, we'd be stylish in death as we'd never been in life, lyin' there together in the middle o' that big, roomy lot.

"An', jus's I expected, that lot's come in awful handy more'n once in all those years. First one person I knew, 'n' then another'd die and not have any place to be buried in, an' I'd tell the folks to come right along an' put him in my place till they got one o' their own. Never been able to offer folks much hospitality of any other kind, but it's always seemed, somehow's if nothing else I could ever have done for 'em would 'a' come in so handy when they needed it most. And now's I was about to say, if you'd care to put your baby there until you've had a chance to catch up on

funeral expenses and get a place o' your own, why, you're just more'n welcome, sonny."

Lewer's interest, which had wandered during the old man's recital, returned when the tale became personally applied, and fixed eagerly on the offer.

"Oh," he said, "would you? You're awfully good—I'd be so grateful—it'd be a help—a big help."

So the matter was settled, and for two or three days the men around the busy office told one another and strangers they met, about the old Skeleton's characteristic offer, and everybody smiled and said, "Queer lot, McBrae!" or "Rum sort!" or "How delicious!" according to age and sex and temperament. Then the affair was forgotten. Even Lewer himself, as the years went by, almost forgot. He was very busy, and though he was very successful, none of his ambitions leaned toward burial-lots, and he was quite content to let that little child of his struggling youth lie in its corner by the yellowing stone curbing marked "McBRAE."

"Please don't tell any of your best stories for three quarters of an hour, or so. I've got to quit this bunch o' good company and wire 'an able editorial' on the Chicago strike situation, to the New York *Tribune*."

With no avid interest, apparently, in the strike, or what Gotham thought of it, Carter Howard pushed back in his chair, rose from the table, and reached for his hat. He had just been asked to dine with a particularly congenial little party at that restaurant where Chicago newspapermen mostly foregather, and just as he was leaving the office came the message asking him to wire the editorial to New York. Cussing his luck, Howard, who did special industrial stuff now, for his own paper and for others, and was reckoned a considerable kind of person in his world—had gone to dinner, promising to "cut it" for an hour about eight o'clock. Ordinarily, he wouldn't have minded so much, but one of the guests to-night was a man Howard had long wanted to meet.

Grumbling, entreating consideration of his cruel absence, promising speedy return, he was gone. In an incredibly short time he was back again.





DRAWN BY F. DE FORREST SCHMOOCK

"Don't try to explain," begged McBrae

"Must 'a' been 'an able editorial,'" some one commented.

"It was. Say, fellows, I've got to tell you. Of course I growled when the *Tribune* wire came, but I didn't suppose anyone was paying a bit of attention to me. When I got back to my desk, ten minutes ago, I found on top of it a really 'able editorial,' and with it a scrawl, 'If these's your sentiments, you're welcome to 'em; put 'em on the wire and go back to your party.'"

"Who—" chorused several voices.

For answer, Howard held out the scrawl. It bore no signature, but nearly everybody present knew the handwriting. Evidently the writer had been in no hurry, for with some expenditure of time he had sketched Howard's desk and, seated before it, a kind of X-ray fat man built around a skeleton, while in a lower corner of the sheet was a rudely but not badly suggested restaurant-scene in which Howard, resembling a man on an early, very early, Egyptian tomb, was cursing choicely as indicated by a large balloon-full of expletives above his head. A clock with a face

like the man in the moon's was winking wickedly as its hands pointed to eight.

"Poor old beggar!" said Howard, tenderly. "I wonder how long it is since he went to a dinner like this? And yet, what he's seen of life in his day! Somebody told me the other day that since his wife died, a year ago, he's been living in a bum, fifth-rate hotel. Funny! how we see a fellow every day and never wonder what becomes of him when he leaves the office."

Then Howard told the stranger about Skelton McBrae's burial-lot; that was always a good story, which lost nothing in a clever newspaper-man's telling.

"Lord knows how many he's got in there by now—and not one of 'em, except his wife, with one bit o' right to be there only that they had no place else to go."

This led those present into a train of interesting stories about old "has-beens" of the newspaper-world; men who had made historic "scoops;" men who had figured large in battlefields and politics and who, for one reason and another—mostly, though, for one reason—had come to sad straits

in their middle-age and their later days.

"There was old Lampson," said Dyrensforth, the noted cartoonist, "who used to come around to our office, years ago, to borrow a quarter—always a quarter. Somehow, it was usually Partridge that he struck—Partridge, the funny man—and Partridge who 'gave up.' So that by and by he got to going straight to Partridge and ignoring the rest of us as if we were beneath 'touching.' Once a week, regular, he'd come, each time, at first, with the air of being embarrassed by the unusualness of the request, then, after a while, with more of the air of a polite collector—if there could be a polite collector—and we used to watch for him with interest, and speculate, after he'd gone, whether he bought two whiskies and a beer, or three beers and a whisky, or five beers. I guess it was five beers, all right, and a free lunch with each, poor old beggar! But once he must have mixed his drinks, or found a quarter, or met a pal who was 'flush,' for he got drunk and disorderly enough to be sent to the bridewell for sixty days and costs. And when he got out, he came around, in all earnestness, and presented Partridge with a bill for \$2.50."

"Oh, come!" giped the others, "this isn't a comic-supplement you're contributing to."

"No—honest! I saw that bill," protested Dyrensforth. "Partridge got him to receipt for payment, and had the thing framed."

"And yet," mused the oldest member of the group, "I can remember when Lampson was ace-high in the newspaper-world and could have walked into any office in Park Row, almost, and hung up his hat and gone to work at a hundred per—which was big money, twenty years ago."

"That's it," cried Howard, "that's the horror of it. Think of Skelt, now, a man who could write that editorial—sometimes—copy-reading, with not'ing ahead, if he doesn't kill himself, but addressing envelopes at seventy-five cents a day. Frank Hannely's doing that—the man who scooped the world on the massacre at Suchow—and when he saves enough out of his day's wages to pay for a lodging and three bum meals, he has just the price of two drinks left. He says he's perfected the simple life; but Frank wasn't cut out for the simple

life, and some fine morning the coroner'll come looking for friends to finance Frank's funeral. Probably Skelt will offer him his long, long hospitality. Lord! It's a rum world!"

There was no keeping that sober note out of the stories thereafter; the ample shadow of the unwitting old Skeleton had fallen athwart the evening's gayety and nobody could bid it begone.

"Wish we had Skelt here," said Howard when the talk that had been so bright and abundant languished and the men around the table lapsed into thoughtfulness. "Talk about stories! He could give Scheherezade cards and spades and beat her at her own game. Say! I believe I'll give the old boy a little dinner for that editorial. I'm ashamed to think I never thought o' doing it before, but this gives me a good excuse. If you fellows will dine with me here to-morrow night, I'll have McBrae along, if I can get some one to read copy for him, and we'll give him one good time, and ourselves, too!"

"Could we get a couple o' the others, too, without—well, without making it seem like a wake?" some one asked when the acceptances had been made, almost in chorus. Could they? They looked at one another questionably. No matter to what depths these old fellows reduced themselves, the younger men, the successful men of the hour, could not offer them anything that even savored, as Howard said, of a "feast to the has-beens—an exhibit of the down-and-outs."

"Perhaps two or three wouldn't feel as conspicuous as one," said the oldest man.

"We might call it a 'war-horses' something-or-other," cried Howard, with a sudden inspiration. Let's see! Anybody here who isn't qualified? No, sir, by the lord Harry! not one. Skelt can come in on almost as many counts as there have been wars in his time, and that'll let in old Farish, and Braden, and that bully old German, Fliederkampf, with the Heidelberg cheek and the eye that the Zulus put out with an assegai. It's too bad to leave out Doddesley, if we can find him, with his tales of the Soudan, and there's a queer queer, queer old derelict floating 'round town, or was, a while ago, who'd been at Shipka Pass and Plevna and seen what he

was pleased to remember as proudly as if he'd caused it all, as 'real slaughter.' Pitted against a fellow who talks about war and mentions San Juan and El Caney, he's simply great. It would probably take a day or two to locate these men, though. Suppose we say the last of the week for the dinner—say Saturday night?"

That meant some shuffling "of dates" for nearly every one, but all agreed that the event promised to be well worth "passing up" other things for it.

The night-rush was over; only "the dog-watch remained on duty, in event of that unexpected which must never happen and find a newspaper-office unprepared. An hour ago the giant presses in the sub-basement had ceased rumbling and the country-edition had been loaded onto the newspaper-trains while the city edition was printing. The wires had been comparatively quiet to-night—news seemed scarce; the world inclined to peace; no man minded to that quarrel with his brother which might serve in the maintenance of the public prints. "Thirty," the distant operators' code-signal that all their news is in, had come early from east and west, and north and south. The air of the office was almost dozy at an hour when it is often charged with wild anxiety, and "the dog-watch" yawned cavernously over their pinochle and craps.

"What's the Skeleton doin' all this time? Writin' to-morrow's 'lead?'" asked Woodson, sleepily; he was new to the "watch" and the night seemed interminable to him.

"The Skeleton! Where?"

"In the city-room; saw him, just now, when I went back for my pipe."

"I don't know. Maybe the poor old beggar's got no place to go. Your lead, Crosby."

In the city-room, which the cleaners would not attack for some time yet to make it decent for another day, only a single light burned and that, low on the table before which McBrae sat, shed its strong, concentrated rays on the spot where he had been copy-reading and, after the rush was over, writing. Not for three hours yet, would the winter-dawn lighten the black window-panes even to leaden gray. The

stillness without and within was perhaps not so positive as comparative; after the bustle of the day and the fever of the night—even of a calm night—it was like the hush of death. Frogs croaking in a marshy wilderness could not have been lonelier.

A bold scout among the rats ventured out in search of any fragments of "bakery lunch" the men might have left in waste baskets, or otherwheres. Seeing the ample figure in the arm-chair, the scout withdrew partly; then, emboldened by the stillness, he ventured again and, after a reconnoiter, gave the signal to the troop. Perhaps he recognized McBrae and remembered that rats had no more terror for that old veteran than roaches. Perhaps, cannier yet, he recognized Another, a Presence sublimely indifferent to all that plagues poor human flesh.

"The dog-watch" was relieved at seven by the vanguard of the day force. It was then that Woodson, going to the city-room for his hat and coat, remembered the Skeleton and, passing him where he sat, shook him by the shoulder.

"Well, he has a place to be buried in, fortunately," said the city-editor when he got down. "We'll pay for the funeral, of course, and lay him away as decently as he could have desired—poor old beggar! Stetson, you 'tend to the thing. See Carter Howard. He knows where McBrae's lot is and all about it."

At noon Stetson came in. His face wore a queer look, as of a man who's half-touched in his human heart, half-elated in his reportorial nature by the find of "a story." Without stopping to speak to any one on the way, he crossed to the city-editor's desk and bent over it importantly, as he could only have done in the conviction of having something interesting to say.

The busy man looked up from his scrutiny of some news from the City Press, which the tube had just shot down to him.

"Well?" he said, briskly.

"The lot's full."

"What lot?"

Absorbed in his work of assignments, the city-editor had forgotten on what errand he had detailed Stetson.

"McBrae's. I've just been to the cemetery office and they told me that the full



DRAAN BY F. DE FORREST SCHOOK

"Who's in there next to Nancy?" the city-editor asked

number of interments their laws allow have already been made in McBrae's lot."

For an instant the city-editor looked at Stetson half-comprehendingly; then the full force of what the young man said reached his pre-occupied brain.

"Well, by the Lord!" he said, slowly, and with more reverence than profanity. "Say, what a story!" he mused aloud. Then, seeing Stetson about to speak, he forestalled him sharply. "No! not for us; we don't deal in sentiment. But for a magazine, a bock—if there's a man anywhere big enough to write it. There isn't, though—there never is, for a story like that." He was musing again, and Stetson, for all his superior was aware of him, was not there.

Henshawe, the police-reporter, bustled importantly up to the desk, evidences of a good story in his every movement, and waited to be noticed before asking instruc-

tions on writing it. But the city-editor paid no heed to him, either, for a moment. Then he recalled himself, listened to the tale of a supposed suicide that promised to develop into a richly sensational murder, gave several orders for the story's development, and turned to Stetson.

"That'll do," he said briefly. "I must talk to the chief about this. You can see the boys about some flowers, if you want to."

Stetson stared, a little startled, by the nature of this command. "If you want to!"

That had never been said before in this office, in his knowledge or according to tradition. It wasn't sarcasm, either. But Stetson could not know that it was an involuntary revelation of the city-editor's state of mind—an unconscious acknowledgment that in the twinkling of an eye his attitude toward the old Skeleton had changed from semi-scornful tolerance to

—well, pretty near to reverence; to a feeling that any possible tribute to the man was a privilege to be allotted, not a command to be laid. No; of course Stetson couldn't know this; the city-editor didn't know it himself, and wouldn't have admitted it in any case. He didn't admit it to the Chief, but the Chief knew. And the Chief didn't commit himself, but the city-editor knew. Some things are best expressed by our efforts to conceal them.

The Chief gave his orders, and the city-editor went to execute them. It was good, that day, to have the power of the press behind one, for the things that were to be done were not easy.

For one dizzy moment the Chief had a vision of another lot for McBrae, near the full one, and a stone telling the story; that story seemed too good to be kept among a few. The world ought, as it passed McBrae's last resting place, to doff its hat in tribute to this old Samaritan! But the vision faded quickly; a mingling of practical remonstrance and sentimental recollection that, after all, McBrae would have preferred to lie unsung in the lot he had known, made the Chief give orders that somebody be lifted from the middle of that lot and put in a single grave somewhere, to make room for the owner.

"Who's in there next to Nancy, where the old man ought to be?" the city-editor asked Carter Howard.

Howard did not know, but the cemetery office could furnish the information. When he heard the news, Howard remembered.

"I know," he said. "There was an old fellow died here about a year ago; he was an ex-circus man and ex-black-face-comedian and 'ex-lot-o'-things' (all 'ex'), and when he died, a brother o' his, who works on some *Horse News* or other, came around to the Skeleton and put up a wail about havin' no place to bury the old fellow, and of course McBrae said, 'Why, sure! put him in my lot.' I suppose that looked 'genteeler' to the brother than lettin' the Elks bury him. McBrae must have known that was his own grave, the last one left and the one by Nancy, but I suppose that brother told some kind of a yarn about taking the 'ex' out as soon as he could scratch enough together for a grave. That's the way I figure it out. And the Skeleton felt it would be mean and selfish for him to be keeping an empty grave that some one needed, and so he let him—"

"Say!"

Howard stopped abruptly, and the city-editor knew why. The familiar, slangy exclamation was not to arrest attention, but to indicate that point in the rush of understanding where speech ends.

"Have the funeral early in the morning—nine o'clock, say—so as many of the boys as possible can be spared to go," the chief ordered. "I'm not conducting a school of living, here, but I do feel that this is a thing those fellows ought not to miss. They delve in the seamy side of things for a living, and, it seems to me, they need something like this for an antidote, once in a while."

## The Praxitiles Company

BY FREEMAN HARDING

IT WAS Weems who managed to persuade me that there was big money in the stove-lining business. For a good many years he'd been the star salesman of the Praxitiles Stove-Lining Company, and he'd built up a big trade. But the Bosses of that money-making concern had, it seemed, hurt his feelings. They had objected to his selling "side-lines" on his trips. There wasn't any earthly reason, he explained, why he shouldn't. Lots of drummers car-

ried side-lines. They hadn't taken any of his time, to speak of. And he made cigar-money out of 'em. It hadn't occurred to him to mention it to the high-muck-a-mucks. And, when they happened to find it out, they made a big row.

Then he got mad. He told Boggs and Keener what he thought of 'em. And they jawed back. Boggs had been abusive; Keener had tried to be sarcastic. When Weems resigned in a huff, they told him



that they'd fired him already for theft—stealing their time. There was no end of bad blood between 'em.

The Praxitiles Stove-Lining Company had a monopoly of the business. It made goods under patents, good strong patents which had been fought to a finish in the courts. Weems knew that some of the foundation ones were about running out; and he studied up a way to get even and to make money for himself at the same time. But he hadn't saved anything; and, to carry out his plans, he had to rope in capital. So he started out to find a man who would put up money.

I'd just cleaned up a real estate deal which had netted me over twenty-five thousand dollars; sold the contract without ever taking the deed. Though I'd saved a little, it was the first money I'd made. With fifteen thousand dollars of it I bought a house. The other ten thousand was burning my pocket. Weems was the fellow that ran up against me that "psychological moment," as the newspapers say. He was a lank man, with snappy eyes and an earnest manner. A mighty persuasive way of putting things he had. He talked that ten thousand dollars out of my pocket and into the stove-lining trade inside of a week.

I had been on the lookout for "a nice tidy business," where I could sit in a revolving armchair in front of a roll-top desk and "look after the office and the finances," as the fellows say in the business-opportunities ads. And I was dead sure I'd found it.

We came to terms mighty quick. It didn't take long for the lawyers to organize the "Excellent Stove-Lining and Supply Company." Weems was stuck on that name; said it would inspire confidence. I was elected president and treasurer. He was made vice-president and general manager. We took an office in the wholesale stove district; hired a bookkeeper, a stenographer, and an office boy.

Then we went to work. My first job was to pay ten thousand dollars into the bank account of the company, which I promptly did. Weems knew of an old fire-clay works, and we rented it cheap. He swore that five thousand dollars would fit it up in good shape to turn out stove-linings, and that

we would be making goods inside of three months. He insisted that the other five thousand dollars of our cash capital was oceans for running the business. His customers, he explained, always discounted their bills—paid cash inside of ten days.

By the time we'd worried through six months of troubles and delays the ten thousand dollars that I'd put in the bank had gone out again. I'd just got to the office that morning and was looking disgustedly at the measly bank balance on the check-stub—\$219.00—when Weems came in, all on fire.

"Thank the Lord!" he said. "Presses are here at last. Draft 11 be in to-day. Soon's it's paid we can get hold of 'um. It'll take less'n a week to set 'um up. Then we can begin shipping," he added exultingly.

"Aint enough money in the bank to pay the draft," I said. "Look at the balance," and I pointed to the figures.

"We've got to pay it. You must find the money somehow. I've worked like a dog night and day. Now's the time for you to show a little sand and I'll make your everlasting fortune."

When he said that I thought I heard Miss Foley, the stenographer, sniff.

"Can't pay drafts with sand. Takes money; and you've spent two dollars where you told me one would do the job," I answered, feeling mighty bitter towards the man.

"Wheeler," he snapped out, putting his face close down and fixing his hypnotizing eyes on mine, "you just borrow the money on that house of yours. The business'll pay it back in no time. Heavens! man, you've got to do it."

That was a dandy house, and it was let to a good man for a fat rent. I hated to mortgage it, but I did. The "nice tidy business" was eating up my money fast.

Finally we did get the factory finished and began to turn out goods. Weems sold 'em all right. He got orders for more than we could make; kept us running overtime, and at good prices, too. That man was a hustler and no mistake. I didn't mind his putting on airs and saying "I told you so," for we were getting ahead of the game.

We had only one competitor—the Praxitiles Company. That fool name stood for just Boggs and Keener. They owned the

whole thing. For a few months we didn't hear anything from 'em. Weems said that they were so cocksure that the reputation of their goods and the long credits they offered would keep the trade from leaving 'em that they'd ignore us. He added that he'd show 'em. Likely things would have gone on without a row for quite a spell longer if Weems hadn't boasted right and left that he was going to put those fellows out of business before he got through with 'em.

One day Nathan Boggs came to see me. He was a big man with a bald head, a triple chin, and a bass drum. His long frock-coat hung over it like a lambrequin. When he took the chair I offered him he seemed to fill the whole place. He drew his coat-tails forward over his knees, and began to talk in a sorrowful voice, wagging his head slowly from side to side.

"I have called upon you, Mr. Wheeler, to protest against the outrageous interference with our trade on the part of Mr. Weems. He is disturbing the kindly relations we have always maintained with our customers. If you confined solicitation to the small houses, it would be easy for you to sell your limited output (the way he said "limited" riled me) and preserve amicable relations with us. But there is one thing I must insist on," he said, raising his thick, heavy voice. "Weems must cease his personal abuse. We don't hold you responsible, but, if there isn't a change, we shall cut prices. When they get down it will be hard to get them up again. We have the money to lose," and he looked as if we hadn't.

I guess my keeping quiet made him think he had me on the run, for he stood up and chopped the air with the edge of his hand.

"And I demand," he said ponderously, "that there be a proper recognition of our prior rights in the trade which we founded and to which we have devoted our lives."

Judging by his talk he might let us stay on the earth if we spoke soft and stepped light, as it were.

By that time I was hot all through, but kept mum till he'd sat down again, wiped the sweat off his head with a big handkerchief and clasped his fat hands over his bass drum.

"I don't mind coming to an understanding," I said; and saw a glint in his pig-eyes and the beginnings of a bamboozling smile around the corners of his mouth.

"If you'll keep Keener from lying about us, I'll keep Weems from telling the truth about Keener. That gives you the best of the

bargain," I said with a nasty sneer.

The man turned brick-red on the top of his head and purple in the face. He reached for his silk hat, got on his legs, buttoned up his frock-coat, and walked out of the office without a word, putting his feet down heavy, like he was trampling somebody. As he shut the door I heard, from behind the typewriter where Miss Foley sat, a little chuckle.

Then there was trouble. The Praxitiles gang sent out a circular that very day, cutting prices to the bone. They forced the fighting by covering the country with drummers. Boggs and Keener called personally



DRAWN BY GLEN C. SHEFFER

It was Weems who managed to persuade me

on the bigger buyers, explaining, remonstrating, promising, and blackguarding us. Weems put on his fighting-pants and worked like a nailer to keep our end up. And he did manage to hang on to most of our trade. He even made some captures from the enemy. But every sale at the cut-prices meant a loss.

From the first, I'd insisted on shipping only bang-up goods. It was heartbreaking to look at the big piles of culls and seconds in the factory yard. Weems kicked; claimed he could sell the stuff at a discount without hurting our brand. But I was mulish.

In spite of our care, it wasn't long after the fight began before we began to get complaints about the quality of our goods. Some big lots were thrown on our hands. Weems went out to look into the matter and came back wild, cussing the works for shipping rubbish; and the samples he'd brought back proved he was right.

That blow struck me on a tender spot. Didn't sleep much during the night; lay awake and put in the time thinking. Bright and early, I went out to the works and got hold of the head-packer. After I'd talked to him awhile, it wasn't hard to guess that the shipping-clerk was on Keener's pay roll as well as ours. I charged him with it and made him own up. "The sneak" had dealt with him direct. It was a job he hadn't dared to trust to anyone else. He'd hired the man to mix culls with the linings we sent out. I scared good strong affidavits out of that shipping clerk; and, when I had 'em all in shape, I went to see the Praxitiles people.

Keener wasn't in; but Boggs was. I told him what his partner'd done. I let myself loose. Threatened to send a circular to the trade telling the whole story. And I was going to sue 'em for big damages; any jury would find for us. I tried to make it clear that Keener's rascality could be made to cost 'em a lot in reputation and cash.

Boggs said he was astounded. There must be some mistake. He'd investigate. I told him he'd better get a move on and do his investigating P.D.Q. He promised that I should hear from him next day. Put his hand on my shoulder in a disgusting, fatherly way and urged me not to do anything rash; he'd make things right.

I'd been worrying a good deal lately; for I'd made up my mind that the way things were going our "nice tidy business" was likely to bust me. The more we sold the more we lost. There was only one way to get out; that was to sell out. And there was only one possible buyer, Boggs. If, with this dirty business, I could club him into a trade, I might save part of my money.

Next day he came to see me. Said that my shipping-clerk must be out of his head. Mr. Keener assured him that there had been no dealings with him. I told Boggs I'd have a jury pass on that. Meantime, there weren't going to be any profits in the Stove-Lining business. I could afford to lose what I was going to get back in the damages I was certain to collect out of 'em. They sold four times as much as we did. Every time we lost a dollar they'd lose four. After trying to jar him off his base, I blurted out that the only way to settle the matter was for 'em to buy us out. He looked at me queer and shook his head; said one factory was worry enough for him.

Then he began to talk reproachfully. Said I did wrong to take such a tone; there wasn't any need of it. They had a high opinion of me and had been sorry to see a good man drawn into a business he didn't understand and which wasn't big enough for two concerns. But, now that I was in, he supposed the best way was to recognize me. The thing to do was for us to work together under a pooling arrangement.

I told him, sulky like, to go on. So he drew up a chair and sat down close to the end of my desk—he'd been standing up while I was bullyragging him—and began to talk in a 'ow, mysterious voice. I couldn't see any reason for it. There wasn't anybody in the room but Miss Foley. He went on to explain that the thing to do was to stop giving away goods, raise the prices, and keep 'em up afterwards. We ought to pool the trade on a percentage basis. To be sure, there were some old-fashioned laws against combinations in restraint of trade; but smart lawyers had found out how to get around 'em. As he talked along he leaned toward me and kept bringing the thick forefinger of his left hand down in the palm of his right so as to mark off he points he was making.



DRAWN BY GLEN C. SHEFFER

"I demand a proper recognition of our prior rights!"

The thing to do, he said, was to organize "The Stove-Lining Association." Its nominal object would be the moral uplifting and social enjoyment of its members. There were hundreds of such organizations in the country. Moral uplifting cost high and warranted paying big money into the treasury, he added, with a fat leer.

This talk puzzled me. I couldn't see what he was driving at; but I grunted to go on.

We'd have to hire a secretary to look after things, he continued, and allow him one per cent of our sales as a salary. Every month he'd call on both of us for reports of our sales which must give the names of every customer and the amount of his purchases. The secretary wouldn't let them see our list and we couldn't see theirs.

Then the secretary would go over both sets of books, to make sure there hadn't been any mistakes or funny business—such as failing to report all sales or giving secret rebates. On the fifteenth of every month each of us would have to send him a check for twenty-five per cent, say, of the amount we'd sold. And on the fifteenth of the following month he'd send us back a check for one half the amount our percentage entitled us to. But, he'd keep the other half to our credit. Meantime, if he found out anything that wasn't as per agreement he'd fine the offender, take the fine out of the funds in his hands to the credit of the guilty one, and give the money to the injured one. And, if either got mad and quit the association, all the cash in the secretary's hands would go to the fellow that

stayed in. But, if all went right, as it was sure to between reasonable men like ourselves, at the end of the year the secretary would divide the accumulation in his hands on the agreed percentage.

Boggs talked slow; I thought fast. It was easy, with half an eye, to see that, if we put through a deal on such lines, there was money to be made. During all Boggs' talk I heard the scratch, scratch of Miss Foley's pencil. I didn't doubt but that she was putting down every word he said; though I hadn't told her to.

I asked him what percentage he wanted for himself. He hemmed and hawed a good deal; but finally said that, though the volume of our business scarcely warranted it, he'd try to persuade Keener to be satisfied with eighty per cent and concede twenty per cent to us. I said "humph" in a sulky way and told him that, if he'd come in the next day in the afternoon, I'd give him an answer. I was glad Weems was away, for I didn't want to consult him. His judgment wasn't much good.

I was in a brown study all that evening, and couldn't make up my mind what to do. I felt sure, though he talked fair, Boggs had something up his sleeve. When I got to the office in the morning a pile of typewritten sheets lay in the center of my desk. I glanced over 'em and found a report of Boggs' talk—word for word. I told Miss Foley how pleased I was. She was fair skinned and blushed easily. Being praised seemed to embarrass her. She mentioned that the year before she'd worked for a firm that was a member of a pool. She'd be glad to give me a note to Mr. Cardwell. He was a nice man and could tell me a good deal about how such an association worked.

Inside of an hour I had a long talk with Cardwell. He advised me to go in. Said it was the only way to prevent cut-throat competition. Then he passed me along to Dawkins, who was their pool-master and looked after a dozen such associations in different lines of trade—made a business of it. Dawkins treated me all right. By the time I left him I had a mighty clear idea of how such pools were run.

Next day, when Boggs came in, I told him that I'd join him in organizing a pool if we could agree upon percentages. He said

he'd talked the thing over with Keener, and though his partner had objected, he'd stand by his offer of twenty per cent to us. I insisted on thirty. He wouldn't hear of it. We wrangled for an hour and finally compromised on twenty-five per cent for us and seventy-five per cent for them.

You see, the trade's a little one. The whole country uses only about five hundred thousand dollars worth of stove-linings in a year. Our running expenses, outside of what we charged into the cost of the goods, including my salary of twenty-five hundred dollars and Weems' salary of the same amount, figured up about twelve thousand dollars a year. Twenty-five per cent of the trade—our percentage—would be one hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars. When we'd boosted the prices the profits would reach forty per cent, and would net us thirty-eight thousand a year. A nice tidy business, for sure. I was glad Boggs hadn't taken up my offer to sell.

We came to terms. Keener tried to work in a heeler of his as pool-master, but I wouldn't have it; insisted on Dawkins and carried my point. Inside of a week the Stove-Lining Association had been organized, prices had been put up till the buyers squealed, and we started in to make a pot of money.

Weems was delighted with the deal; but he had a hard time placating his customers. Trade fell off, but we knew it was only temporary. The buyers had to have the goods and could only get 'em from one of us.

When Dawkins had figured up the first month's sales he told me that we'd only done sixteen per cent of the trade. Weems chuckled at drawing most a thousand dollars out of the profits of the enemy. You see, the Praxitiles Company had to pay in twenty-five per cent of their sales, and we got credit for all they paid into the pool on excess sales over their quota of seventy-five per cent.

But I didn't like it. I began to see that I'd made a mistake in limiting the pool to one year. Dawkins had urged three years, but I hadn't agreed to it, and now I was sorry. If the other fellows continued to sell more than their quota they'd get the trade cinched before the end of the pool year. And if we didn't get our share of orders,



we couldn't keep our factory busy and would find it hard to hold on to our skilled labor. Even if the enemy did pay us twenty-five per cent of their excess sales, the profits were forty per cent and we lost the difference. I made Weems see this; he drummed like the devil, and we managed to keep our end up.

By that time our office was working smoothly. We had a twelve-dollar-a-week

thing, and I'd have to attend to it. She was down on the bookkeeper, Joseph, to beat the band. And she didn't take to Weems. I had to check her for slurring him. By that time I didn't care much for him myself. But we were in the same boat.

Things went along to the Queen's taste for about nine months. Money piled up in the bank and in the pool-master's hands, and I was feeling good, when suddenly,



DRAWN BY GLEN C. SHEFFER

He lurched forward and reached for the pocket book

bookkeeper. Joseph Bilcher was his name. He was a clock-watcher. Weems had hired him and made a point of keeping him on. If he hadn't I'd have fired him long before. I blew him up a lot and he didn't like me, not a bit.

But little Maggie Foley, the stenographer, was a wonder. She took my dictations and turned out a highly finished product—put in a lot of words that made my letters seem polished. I felt like a “literary feller” when I read ’em over. The way she ate up work was a caution. Every morning I found a typed memorandum on my desk; a list of appointments and things to be done. And she made me do ’em. If I tried to lay off and smoke she’d dig out some-

our orders began to fail off. The Boggs-Keener gang were getting away a lot of our trade. They had enticed some of our skilled workmen to leave us. I went to see Boggs, but he denied everything, and said that, even if we closed our works, we’d have handsome profits. He didn’t see anything for us to complain of.

I got so worried that next day I pitched into Weems.

“You’re letting those fellows steal our trade,” I said. “You must know what it’ll lead to when the time comes to renew the pool. Appears like you’ve lost your grip.”

I expect my voice sounded bitter, for his face got white and he snapped his teeth together as if he’d bite my head off.

"I do all the work," he shouted; "on the road most of the time, hardly ever with my family. And you—you!" he repeated, "hold down an armchair all day. If you ran your part of the business as well as I do the makin' and sellin', things would go. What can you expect," he sneered, "of a concern looked after by a red-headed Irish girl, while you sit round and watch her do it?"

Miss Foley's hair wasn't red; it was auburn and curly at that. She was out at the time, or I'd have hit him sure.

A couple of weeks later, and two months before the pool expired by limitation, Boggs came into the office. He looked at Miss Foley, who was banging the typewriter, and said he'd like to have a private talk. I told him Miss Foley knew all I did and, if there was anything I hadn't told her about the business, it was an oversight. I saw her flush clear up to her hair and she clicked the machine harder than ever. I insisted that he fire away. He stood so close that he almost hung over my desk and looked down at me kind of sorrowful. He began to talk in a slow patronizing voice:

"I deeply regret," he droned, "that your trade has fallen off so. Under the circumstances, we are unable to see our way to renew the pool for another year. I hope, however, that we can make a gentleman's agreement to maintain prices."

I saw what it meant and felt desperate.

"A gentleman's agreement!" I said, laughing a hoarse laugh. "With you? With Keener? Can't be done. Aint a gentleman in your outfit to make it with. Talk about maintaining prices; I'll cut 'em wide open. We'll give goods away and furnish souvenirs besides. Take a chair. We might just as well have this thing out now."

He took off his overcoat, laid it on a chair, put his silk hat on top of it and polished his head with a handkerchief. But he wouldn't sit down; stood there looking grimmer and grimmer while I cursed for fair. When I'd quieted a bit he said, very dignified, that he was sure that I'd regret my language. Putting on his hat and coat, he bowed and walked out.

After that I went to lunch. I stayed at the table a good while, thinking over things and trying to see my way clear. But I could-

n't. Boggs had me in the door and he'd squeeze me sure. I was afraid that he might cook up some dodge to tie up our money in the pool. To be sure, Dawkins wasn't their man and I could trust him. Weems had been disgruntled ever since that squabble about Miss Foley—sullen and sarcastic. Mighty little good he'd be when he heard the news.

Maggie Foley was hammering the typewriter like mad when I got back to the office. She had a high color and looked excited. I sat down at my desk, cleaned my pipe, filled it, and, as I began to suck comfort out of it, I heard the swish of paper as she snatched it out of the machine. Then she came and stood by my desk.

"Mr. Wheeler," she said in a snappy voice.

"Well?" I answered, calm under the influence of the weed.

"Here is Mr. Boggs' pocketbook. I picked it up after you went to lunch. When he put his overcoat on the chair it must have dropped out of the pocket. I looked through it to make sure it was his."

With a tap, she laid upon the desk before me a long, bulging pocketbook greasy with use. I'd have known it for Boggs' if I'd found it in the street. It looked like him.

Miss Foley went on crisply:

"In it I found a letter from Mr. Weems to Mr. Boggs enclosing a statement in Joseph's handwriting. It gives your trial balance for the month, list of shipments, list of receivables, and memoranda of liabilities. Here it is, and she laid it open before me. And, here is Mr. Weems' letter urging that you should be notified at once of the termination of the pool. It says he's arranged with two more customers, whose orders will go to the Praxitiles Company."

I looked at her with my mouth wide open as she laid the second paper on the first.

"But that isn't all," she added. "Here is a contract between Mr. Weems and Mr. Boggs for the employment of Mr. Weems at four thousand a year salary, and providing that before leaving the "Excellent" company he is to use every effort to transfer its business to the Praxitiles Company; and agreeing that ten thousand dollars of Praxitiles stock is to be put in his name.

She laid it upon the other papers, went back to her typewriter and began to make it click.

So Boggs had bought Weems, and this was why our trade was leaving us. For ten minutes I sat smoking fast and then I opened the pocketbook and, without looking at 'em, put the papers inside and laid it on my desk.

"Miss Foley," I said, "please call up Mr. Boggs."

When I heard his thick, heavy voice asking who it was, I answered.

"Boggs," I said, "this is Wheeler. There's a pocketbook here. It's been identified by papers inside as yours. If you want it, come and get it."

He answered that he'd be around right away. I could hear him breathe hard, and knew he was worked up.

Miss Foley heard my telephone talk.

"Are you going to read those papers?" she asked in an intense voice.

"Nope," I answered cheerfully.

She got up, took her hat and coat off a hook, and put 'em on. Her face was pink and her eyes blazed.

"I'm going to lunch," she said, and swept out of the office, shutting the door sharp.

I laughed.

Inside of five minutes Boggs came in. Cold as it was, he was all heated up and he looked flustered. When he saw the pocketbook lying in front of me he lurched forward and reached for it with a "thank you, thank you."

"Hold on," I said, "I want some consideration for handing this back;" and, slipping it into a drawer, I turned the key.

"What does this mean?" he asked looking black as thunder.

"It means," I answered, "that I'm going out of the Stove-Lining business. I've got a block of stock of the 'Excellent Stove-Lining Company,' and it's for sale—a controlling interest, mind. And you're going to buy it. My price is forty-five thousand dollars. One hundred and fifty shares at three hundred dollars a share. At present it's earning fifty per cent, so it's too cheap; but I'm not so much of a hog as some men."

"I don't want your stock at any price. Why should I buy it?" he answered.

"Because you are after my business and that's the only way to get it that won't put you behind bars. I'm not sure but it's compounding a felony to sell it to you, but, I'll take the risk."

He changed his tone to dignified protest. When he found that didn't work, he tried to wheedle me; and I got pretty fierce.

Right in the thick of the tall talk Miss Foley came back. As soon as she got to her desk I said:

"Miss Foley, I want to draw up a bill of sale. Type it with a carbon."

And I dictated a contract for Boggs to buy and for me to sell fifteen thousand, par value, of the stock of the "Excellent Company" for three hundred dollars a share; delivery and payment to be made of even date.

As he listened his lower jaw fell and he turned purple.

She ran it off in a jiffy.

"This will have to be under seal," I explained. "Miss Foley, get the notary from next door."

While she was out I turned on Boggs. "You hog," I shouted. "I'd rather put you and your sneaking partner and that traitorous dog Weems in stripes. I ought to make my price higher. If you don't sign here and now without any 'Ifs' or 'Ands' I'll double it."

Just then Miss Foley and the notary came in. I signed both copies.

"This is my signature, Mr. Wilson," I said, "and this is Mr. Boggs'. Here's a pen, Mr. Boggs."

He took it, looked at me a minute and, by the Lord Harry! he signed.

"Boggs," I said, in a matter-of-fact voice, as soon as the notary had gone out, "go and get a certified check to my order. Have it here by three o'clock, mind."

He went out, all bent over. I got my stock out of the safe, endorsed it in blank, had Miss Foley witness my signature, and waited.

He was back by half-past two. I handed him the stock, unlocked the drawer, and passed him his pocketbook and he gave me the check. He glared threateningly for a minute. I smiled back.

"By the by," I said, "I haven't read any of those papers; Miss Foley found the pocketbook and told me what was inside."



DRAWN BY GLEN C. SHEFFER

"I'm going into a new business, Mary—in the domestic line."

With a choked oath he stumbled out.

"Miss Foley," I said, after he'd gone. "Please take this check around to the bank and deposit it to the credit of my private account. I don't like to trust Joseph."

When she came back I dictated my resignation as an officer and director of the

company. As she handed it to me to sign her curiosity got the better of her.

"How did you make him buy you out?" she asked.

"Why, my dear," I answered, "I knew he'd think I'd read those papers."

"But why didn't you read them?"

"Well," I said, somewhat embarrassed by the question, "there are things a man won't do himself that he isn't above having done for him."

She looked at me, mighty indignant.

"I suppose you'll close this office. How soon am I to leave? I'd like a recommendation," she said stiffly.

"I'm going into a new business, Mary—in the domestic line—and shall need every moment of your time," was my answer. She flushed, turned pale, and began to speak defiantly, tossing her head in a way she had.

"I didn't tell you the truth about that pocketbook. I saw it drop out of his pocket, and was dreadfully afraid he'd see it. I was sure you'd send it back to him without looking *inside*. Men are so silly about

such things. So, while you were at lunch, I looked it through and made copies of those papers. They aren't of any use now—"

She handed me several typewritten sheets, all certified "a true copy, Mary Foley." That girl knew how to do business.

"About the new enterprise," I said. "It's in the domestic line and can't possibly be carried on *without* you."

Before it dawned on her what I meant, I put my arm around her and kissed her. And, by Jove! lucky dog that I am, she kissed back.

Yes, Jim, things have gone pretty well. All that happened six months ago. And now, I've got a dandy wife in that dandy house. I say, Jim, you must go home to dinner with me. I won't take no for an answer. You'll like Mrs. Wheeler.

## Noblesse Oblige

BY MARVIN DANA

Author of "The Wisdom of the Abbot," etc

**T**OMMY DEBBINS was anæmic without and within. He had no grace save the grace of gold. The arts of civilization had passed him by; the Muses knew nought of that barren thing, his soul. He was, in short, a miserable, sickly youth, who, at the age of twenty-five, was wholly lacking in intelligence, education, and good-looks. His sole admirable quality was the possession of great wealth.

In a vague way, Tommy Debbins believed that his mother had died while he was yet an infant in arms; he knew positively that his father was dead, because he had seen him in a coffin only three months before. This loss, however, did not distress him in the least. For two dozen years his father had cuffed and cursed him, while poor and drunk; for one year, he had cuffed and cursed him, while rich and drunk.

The old man, a life-long worker of the humblest sort in mills, had had but two gleams of intelligence in his career. By aid of the first, he discovered an ingenious and inexpensive contrivance that conducted a current of air to the surface of the burning coal in furnaces. This caused

the gases that otherwise escape up the flue to be consumed. The result was an enormous saving of fuel. By aid of the second gleam of intelligence, he was so provident as to patent his device. A company was formed; the old man received thousands in cash and the certainty of other thousands in royalties. Thereat, having been a drunkard always, he devoted his entire time, unremittingly, to this vice. He passed rapidly from hotel to hotel—as requested by the respective managements to leave—in one long, bibulous *orgy*. Within the twelvemonth, a Bellevue strait jacket received him, and in its embrace he died.

Such are the sole salient points in the lineage and history of Tommy Debbins.

Yet, to-night, as Tommy Debbins sat in the foyer of his hotel on the avenue, the passer-by would hardly single him out for particular attention. Having no mind of his own, his dress was accurate, for he yielded implicit obedience to his tailor, who was excellent. Having no vices, his constitutional sickness gave him a pallor which sufficiently resembled that of other youths about him, though their complexions had been offered as sacrifices on the



altars of dissipation. Otherwise, it was not morality that restrained Tommy Debbins from evil courses, merely an appallingly bad digestion. Any sort of alcoholic drink made him ill, instantly; three cigarets of the mildest caused him uneasiness if taken in a single afternoon. A late supper was a physical catastrophe, and the least excitement sent him to bed with a raging headache. In addition, he was subject to chronic colds and rheumatism, and to diseases generally in their turn. He had suffered acutely, even in the time of his poverty, when he had been forced to the distraction of labor at such times as he was able to crawl about. Now, however, his sufferings were multiplied and intensified by idleness and the discovery of innumerable grave symptoms by the most costly members of the faculty.

Thus Tommy Debbins was anemic without and within, and possessed no grace save the grace of gold.

"I'm off for the country to-morrow," remarked one of two young men who sat near Tommy Debbins.

"I'll be getting out soon," the other said. "It's too hot for town. No resort for mine, though. I want the real thing."

"Devilish slow, with nothing but country. Must have a country club, anyhow."

"Then you drink as much—more than you would in town. No, I take a rest; cut it all out. I'm going up to Thornton's, on the Hudson; nice folk, nice house, and no fancy bumming; fine old family mansion, quiet, peace—great!"

Tommy Debbins heard no more. A sudden wave of excitement swept over him. In the last year, he had visited some "resorts," but he had never lived a day in the "real thing." The supposititious charms of rural quietude, though unknown to Tommy Debbins, appealed to him strongly. Yes, he himself would seek these tranquil delights. His excitement grew. With it came the inevitable sickness, the nausea that was the precursor of headache. While yet there was time, he rose and staggered off to bed.

Nevertheless, his determination remained. As soon as he was able to move out of his room, he went to interview his lawyer.

"Buy me a house," he directed baldly.

"I want it on the Hudson—the real thing, you know, just country—fine old family mansion."

He had not sufficient knowledge to be more explicit, but he gave his man of affairs complete authority to carry on the negotiations.

"You are in a hurry?"

"Yes."

"If I can buy one with a staff of servants and everything complete, furniture, plate, and so forth, do you want me to?"

"Yes, yes."

"And, if the house is empty, shall I have it put in shape, and get servants, a housekeeper, and all?"

"Yes, yes; attend to everything, and be as quick as you can."

Within a month, Tommy Debbins received word from the lawyer that he had purchased the family mansion of the Cottrells, at Fortington-on-the-Hudson, with all the furnishings complete, books, pictures, plate, a staff of servants, and a hundred acres of park. The last of the Cottrells had fallen on evil days; the property had been mortgaged for its full value, and the owner had been thankful to accept a trifling sum beyond the extent of his liabilities. The original staff of servants, as maintained by the heir, had consisted of only two, a housekeeper and a gardener, but to these the lawyer had added a half-dozen, and the place was now ready for its new proprietor at any moment.

Tommy Debbins promptly retired to his bed, until he should recover from the illness occasioned by this announcement that his desires were to be fulfilled. On the third day after receiving the lawyer's communication, he took the train for Fortington-on-the-Hudson.

When he left the train, Tommy Debbins experienced a keen pleasure at first sight of the dainty station, belted with immaculate turf, in which flowers were embroidered. He felt that he, too, as a local proprietor, had a right to a personal pride in all the appointments of the place. In the same spirit, he regarded the uniformed attendant with approval, and found, with immense satisfaction, that the man's manner left nothing to be desired. As a matter of fact, Tommy Debbins had been accustomed to disrespect from many with



DRAWN BY JEROME UHL

There it was at last—his house

whom he came in contact; indeed, one might say from most, save the obsequious few who knew his tips.

But now, as he inquired the way to Cottrell Manor, the man answered with remarkable courtesy, and, when he had finished his directions, added, apologetically:

"I beg your pardon, sir, but may I ask if this is Mr. Debbins?"

Vastly astonished, Tommy Debbins admitted his identity. Then, plucking up courage, he questioned as to how he came to be known in Fortington.

"Oh," was the ready answer, "we heard that a Mr. Debbins had bought the manor, and, when you asked to be directed, I just thought that possibly you might be the one—though I don't know why I should. I suppose you have been there before, but I haven't seen you at the station here. Automobiled, perhaps?"

"Why, no," Tommy Debbins replied, rather reluctantly. "I only heard that the place was in the market, and—er—bought it, you know—real country, you see."

"Well, sir, I wish you welcome. Glad someone is going to keep the old place up. We're very fond of the manor—a local landmark. You'll be proud of it. Good-day, sir."

Tommy Debbins set out on his way up the village street as directed, and his heart was swollen with pride. It came on him at this moment, for the first time in his life, that he was a man of importance, a man of standing in this beautiful community. The conduct of the man at the station had been a shock, but a most blissful one; something unique, a splendid augury for the future. Happiness thrilled Tommy Debbins, and it so mastered him that he quite forgot to be ill in consequence of this excitement. As he went, he stared eagerly on every side, finding new pleasure in the neatness of the shops and the staid respectability of the houses that bordered the way. When he came to the hilltop beyond the village, and saw the wide beauty of the landscape, set with stately homes, his joy was full. He, Tommy Deb-

bins, was one of the dwellers in this land. He was coming home!

Palpitating with new emotions, Tommy Debbins passed the second of the two houses on the right side of the way. The third place, according to the instructions given him, would be his own. As he reached the hedge that was the evident boundary on the far side of his neighbor's grounds, he hardly dared raise his eyes to contemplate his home. But presently he nerved himself for the great moment, and looked up.

Ah, there it was, at last—his house—standing solemnly, in the dignity of years and greatness. It was not too large, nor yet too small; just that most imposing bulk which suggests grandeur but does not destroy the charming aspect of a home. Tommy Debbins loved it on sight. He loved every brick and stone of it there and then. He loved the massive chimneys, the great sweep of steps that ran to the portal, the marble balconies, the French windows, the drapery of silken hangings within the open shutters, the keystone in the arch above the entrance hall, in which the arms of the Cottrells were graven.

He stood for a time absorbed in rapturous contemplation, gloating over every detail of house and grounds, of graveled drive and grassy slope. A fountain playing amid the shrubberies near at hand moved him to ecstasy. What was a hotel on the avenue? This was a home! He turned into the grounds and went on hastily; he feared lest this excess of emotions might make him ill before his household should form acquaintance with him.

A stately servant met him at the door.

"I'm Mr. Debbins," the owner declared, in a voice that was tremulous.

"I'm proud to welcome you, sir, to your own 'ouse, sir. I'm James, sir. Will you have a tub, sir?"

"Why, I guess not," Tommy Debbins stammered, puzzled and alarmed.

"A cup of tea, sir, or brandy-and-soda, sir?"

"Ah, tea, yes," said the master of the house, with much relief.

"And where will you 'ave it, sir?" the butler questioned. "In the library, sir?"

"Why, yes," said Tommy Debbins, "I think I will—yes, in the library."

He was ushered down the hall, in which he saw nothing very clearly—it seemed so dark after the bright sunlight outside—and into a room absolutely unlike any other he had ever entered. The servant departed in search of tea, and to inform his fellows that the new owner seemed "armless, and not to know 'is hown mind."

Tommy Debbins was left alone.

Despite the momentary embarrassment into which he had been thrown by his encounter with the butler, he was still happy, and again pleasure thrilled him as he looked about the stately, cozy room. For the room was both. The high ceilings and the spaciousness of the apartment gave it an air of aristocratic dignity that was enhanced by the great chandelier with its myriad cut-glass pendants, the book-cases that filled two walls, the ponderous gilt cornices and heavy silks that hung at the windows, the inlaid floor, the rich rugs. But, too, there were innumerable things that gave to the place the indefinable character that comes from generations of occupants: the variety of pictures on the walls, which witnessed the personal tastes of different owners; the shelves of books, some haughty in tooled-leather sets, others battered by frequent reading and resting untidily in their places; the lamps arranged near favorite chairs; the ancient candelabra on the mantle; the guns, foils, and swords on the walls; stands cluttered with bric-a-brac; the vases, the statues; the great table, with its massive writing materials; even the safe in a corner, and the old Dutch clock by the door. A smaller room had been hopelessly spoiled by the extent of the contents, but here they only littered the place pleasantly, and gave it the character of home. Undoubtedly, this was the favorite spot in the manor. Tommy Debbins stared long and eagerly, and knew that, did the house give him nothing else, this single chamber would fill the measure of his content.

Life in Cottrell Manor was one long dream of joy to Tommy Debbins. Never before had he known real pleasure. Hitherto, his nearest approach to enjoyment had been of a negative character, in the

relief that comes from the cessation of acute suffering, in the torpor of rest after wearing toil. Now, all this was changed. He still suffered often and bitterly from the ills of his wretched flesh, but his poor, benumbed, hibernating soul was warmed into life, and issued forth from the dark cave of its troubled slumber into the Spring sunlight of happiness. If his blood flowed no more swiftly and no more redly, at least some of his brain-cells became active, and the spirit in the man drew nourishment from his environment. He became interested in the events of his own household, and soon this interest expanded and included all his neighbors.

And his own simple, unaffected delight in others wrought its inevitable result. He loved and cherished all his dependants, and in turn they grew fond of him. At first, they made a mock of him: for his smallness, his pallor, his meekness, his quiet, and his ignorance. But this passed. Little by little, they learned his goodness, his patience under suffering, his invariable consideration of them, even his increasing affection for them. So, they came to care for him, with a feeling that had something of contempt in it, perhaps, but one that promised soon to lose this quality in protecting tenderness.

And as of the servants, so of the neighbors. At first, they laughed, and the malicious held Tommy Debbins up to ridicule. But, as time went on, they found him dependable in everything save health. He exhibited no vices; he was liberal; he was sympathetic. He said nothing of importance, ever; but, on the other hand, he said nothing unimportant, for he rarely advanced beyond monosyllabic attempts at conversation. In a world where most of us say quite needless things all the time, this reticence on the part of Tommy Debbins counted much in his favor. His arrival never caused any heart-burnings among the conversationalists of a group, for he would never insist on relating his own experiences or ideas; on the contrary, his presence always added a sympathetic listener to the prosiest tale. The bores came to love Tommy Debbins.

The new lord of the manor threw himself into the social life of the region with what was, in him, surprising energy.

Never before had he been active beyond what necessity demanded. Now, he returned every call that was made at the manor. That he sat shy and speechless in drawing-rooms or on lawns, did not take from the integrity of his purpose. After his election to the country club—for he found, to his astonishment, that this "real country" possessed a club—he rode or drove to it daily, and beamed on every occupant who noticed him. He was fond, too, of purchasing refreshments for others, and this made him popular with many men, though they regarded him as a milk-sop, since he held, as for life, to the soft solace of lithia water. With the women, as well, he attained a slow, but certain, popularity. To be sure, he was utterly useless from any sentimental standpoint, but women at times require things other than sentiment, notably an escort. Tommy Debbins became almost a professional escort. He would, on an occasion, escort any woman, mother, or daughter or aged aunt, anywhere and anyhow. Illness, even, could hardly drive him from this duty.

And then—there was his money.

Tommy Debbins wore a halo, a halo of pure gold, so that the impecunious looked on him with awe and the wealthy with sympathy. Many a matron would gladly have had him for a son-in-law; many a widow would have welcomed his protestations of passion. For Cottrell Manor was a beautiful place, even among many beautiful country-houses, and back of it was the golden stream, flowing straight from the furnace-flues into the strong-boxes of Tommy Debbins. Unhappily, this moneyed youth failed to fix his affections on any particular person, so far as gossip could discover. He was evidently enraptured by women in general.

It was, indeed, the first time in his life that he had met gentlewomen face to face. Never having known a mother of his own, he worshiped the maternal in each matron. They were all angels to him, even the fat and sordid, for his feeling hallowed them. And the girls, too, were angels still more wonderful, strange, exalted, unapproachable. It was a never-ceasing miracle to Tommy Debbins that he could sometimes have the care of such divinities, as their escort. In the routine of his life, he went to

church every Sunday morning; first, because the housekeeper seemed to expect it of him; afterward, for his own satisfaction. His thirsty soul drank in spiritual truths, as a sponge blown across the Sahara might suck up the waters of an oasis. Having known nothing of religion hitherto, he now reveled in it, and this increased his good disposition toward all the rest of the world, and particularly toward women. He seized on two saving truths—and they were the beginning and the end of his dogma—"God is love," and, "The best proof of it is woman." Thus, he loved all the world, and more, he loved all women.

Cottrell Manor possessed a picture-gallery, and this vied with the library for Tommy Debbins' favor. On one side, the windows opened to the west, and here the master was wont to come of afternoons, for his little soul was growing to love beauty, and, from the open windows, there was a magnificent scene, over undulating lawns and bower-like woods, on to the rippling blue of the Hudson and the stately grace of the Palisades. The glory of the sunset seen from this spot was enough to feed any starving soul with spiritual food, and it fed the soul of Tommy Debbins. Each time he beheld this miracle of the western skies, he was filled with new raptures and new aspirations toward good.

And then, one day, a curious thing happened. The sunlight, entering through the window, fell full on the face of one of the portraits. The master's gaze followed the ray idly, and it occurred to him to wonder if, by any chance, the old gentleman in the picture enjoyed the view from the window. This was a flight of imagination, and Tommy Debbins had never before in all his life been guilty of any such performance. He was vastly astonished at himself, and inclined to suspect that he was doing wrong in cherishing the fancy. Nevertheless, cherish it he did, and it led to extraordinary results.

From that day, the portraits in the gallery began to be as things alive to Tommy Debbins. First, naturally, the old gentleman on whom the sunlight had fallen became endowed with being by the imagination of its owner. Every afternoon for a week, the youth stared at the painted presentment of the old man, until the image became in-

stinct with life. It was as if the spirit of the dead Cottrell dwelt within the colors of the canvas, and masked itself but thinly beneath the pigments of the artist.

It occurred to Tommy Debbins that he would like to know something of the history of the old gentleman. To inform himself in this particular, he sought the housekeeper.

Mrs. Williams accompanied him to the gallery.

"Oh, that," she said, when Tommy Debbins had indicated the object of his curiosity, "that was Judge Cottrell."

"Oh, Judge Cottrell! He was a judge, then?"

"Yes, he was a judge," Mrs. Williams replied. Then, as one launched on a favorite theme, she continued volubly: "Yes, that's Judge Cottrell. He was a great man, sir. He was a judge of the highest court in Massachusetts, and died in 1821. He was the great-grandfather of Warren Cottrell. Judge Cottrell wrote a lot of books. He was a wonderful scholar. He was looked up to by the nation."

"What were some of the books?" Tommy Debbins inquired, deeply impressed.

"Well, sir, I can't exactly rightly say as I know the names of 'em. You see, sir, they're full of learning and pretty hard for ordinary folk. But I can show them to you in the library, sir."

Tommy Debbins expressed his willingness to behold the learned works, and went with the housekeeper to the library, where she pointed out a whole shelf adorned with imposing volumes. The titles were quite as difficult to the master of the house as they had been to Mrs. Williams. "International Economics," "Heretical Metaphysics," "The Solidarity of the Anglo-Saxon Races," and like ponderous verbiage stirred Tommy Debbins to profound veneration.

"I must read them," he exclaimed glibly, to conceal his awe.

Then, immediately, he was smitten with dismay, for his conscience insisted that, having made this rash announcement, he must regard it as a promise, to be kept religiously. There was one consolation, however: no time had been specified; he would not hurry the task unduly. He sighed at the prospect, as he again turned his attention to the housekeeper.



"And then, sir," Mrs. Williams was saying, "you can read all about him in this history of his life, what he wrote himself. I've heard tell, sir, that it's most improving. He's put in, they say, everything that ever happened to him from the time he was an infant, and lots beside that never happened, but just things he thought of from time to time, I guess. Mr. Cottrell told me once that there was more in that there one book than any one else would ever want to know."

"I'll have to read—"

Tommy Debbins interrupted himself sharply. No, he would not bind himself to read the autobiography of the great Judge Cottrell, at least, not until he had read the other books—whenever that might be. Again he sighed.

But despite this depressing incident, Tommy Debbins was gloriously interested. This ancestor of the house had been a famous man, one of national importance; he had written books, of which the titles alone were beyond common understanding. Tommy Debbins felt that he must dip into the record of the famous one's life, if only to learn more of his habits and place of residence. It was certain that he had not made his home in the manor while a judge in Massachusetts, but it was very probable that his boyhood had been spent

within these walls. Often, doubtless, he had graced this very room with his majestic presence during his later years of grandeur. Tommy Debbins hurried back to the gallery, that he might stare rever-

ently at the stern face of the judge.

The interest thus aroused by a ray of sunlight on the picture of Judge Cottrell, was prolonged and increased by a study of the other portraits of the collection. The housekeeper found him a small volume of the family biography, and, with this in his hand, Tommy Debbins grew familiar with the manor's ghosts.

Without doubt, the Cottrells had been men of power. Many had been prominent in the councils of the nation; some had represented it at foreign courts; among them had been eminent lawyers, presidents of colleges, great divines, men of science, men of letters.

There were about three-score portraits in the gallery, and few among the men had been obscure. Here and there was one who had preferred to live out his days as a quiet country gentleman, but, for the most part, the race had been full of an energy that demanded achievement in the important concerns of public life. Tommy Debbins read the book and studied the pictures, and his little heart was filled with eagerness to emulate these.



DRAWN BY JEROME UHL

"I am Mr. Debbins," the owner declared

That he recognized his own limitations, his absolute incapacity, did not lessen the pang of desire. The contrast afforded by himself, in appearance, in mind, in attainments, in soul, as compared with these giants whose effigies he had bought, moved him to anguish. The Americans were enough to overwhelm him; the dozen or so of English forbears fairly annihilated his self-respect. There was one in particular, a cavalier, portrayed in luxurious periwig, with a debonair countenance in which the smiling lips and scornful eyes seemed to be ridiculing the pretensions of this pigmy, Tommy Debbins.

The master of the house stared at the cavalier furtively, and wondered if, by any chance, his spirit had ever strayed to this home of his descendants. He sincerely hoped not.

And there was another gentleman, in robes of weird richness, who had been a mayor and knighted by his king, Sir Arthur Cottrell. Tommy Debbins had seen live lords strolling in the corridors of his hotel in town, but he had never spoken to one, and now he had this intimacy with a knight thrust on him, by the accident of purchase. There were other pictures that depressed him by the dignity of their subjects, but the cavalier and Sir Arthur most worried his nerves.

A week of melancholy meditation on the greatness of the Cottrells put Tommy Debbins in bed with an attack of acute neuralgia, which lasted for three days. In the added nervousness of disease, his newly developed imagination increased its activity, and he came to believe that the shades of the departed Cottrells haunted the manor. His sanity was sufficient to save him from open superstition, but in his secret consciousness he did not doubt that the tie of race held those souls of the great to this habitat. Probably, their immaterial home was elsewhere, in high heaven; but certainly they must come often to this spot where so many of their blood had dwelt.

And what must the visiting spirits think of him, Tommy Debbins? Among such, he was an interloper, one who had thrust his parvenu presence into their exalted company by the sordid power of gold. How they must despise him!

Mrs. Williams suggested to Tommy Debbins, soon after his attack of neuralgia, that he should give a dinner. He was startled and alarmed by the idea, but Mrs. Williams was firm, and in the end she triumphed. She pointed out to him that it was a duty he owed to his position. The manor had always been famed for its hospitality, she explained. She might have added that its distinction in this direction during the last three generations was the direct cause of the decay in the family fortunes. As in many another old family, the energy had passed from the blood, and the last of the line had done nothing to increase the tribal glory, much to dim it, and in the dimming had dissipated the fortune. The little book, however, said nothing of these, and Tommy Debbins dreamed only of the Cottrell splendors. So, now, it was borne in on him that as a duty he should maintain the manor's reputation as a dispenser of social enjoyment. Yes, he must give a dinner, a dinner worthy of the Cottrells. In this instance, at least, his despised gold would be of appreciable use.

After a visit to the gallery, Tommy Debbins was aglow with enthusiasm over the project. It had seemed to him that the cavalier mitigated the contempt in his stare; that Sir Arthur glowered less haughtily on him; that Judge Cottrell relaxed in a measure the severity of his lofty brow.

But Mrs. Williams restrained his first ardors. She insisted that it was not necessary to invite everybody of any social standing in the county. He would give other dinners—in fact, a series of them. For the first, twenty guests would be quite sufficient. Besides, the resources of the kitchen and servants could not supply more to the best advantage, and the dinner must be without flaw: the manor was known for the perfection of its dinners. This, of course, settled the matter, and Tommy Debbins was fain to be content. With Mrs. Williams' aid, the list was made out, a careful selection of the most distinguished neighbors; and the acceptances were received in due course. Tommy Debbins was all eagerness for the great event, and stood the excitement unusually well.

However, he could not free himself from the incubus imposed by the phan-

toms the portraits suggested. Much as he hoped that his efforts toward a hospitality worthy of the Cottrells might appease the contemptuous ancestors of the house, he could not overcome his awe of them and his consequent alarm as to their disposition regarding himself. He had recently discovered a lurking ferocity in the black eyes of General Cottrell, who had been, according to the little book, a warrior of fearful stubbornness and blood-thirsty beyond belief. Perhaps this redoubtable fighter had only disgust for the softer graces of life, and detested dinner-giving as the silly resource of women and weaklings—like Tommy Debbins. Unfortunately, there was no help for it now. The cavalier, at least, would be pleased; he looked frivolous, rather; and, too, Sir Arthur, who presented the portly waist of a glutton. Later, he might hit on some means of pleasing the martial spirit of the general: join the militia, or take the Grand Army Post on an excursion the Fourth of July. On the whole, the second seemed preferable, for his own sake as well as the general's.

The dinner came off in due course. The table, decorated by the joint efforts of Mrs. Williams, James, and Tommy Debbins' check to the florist, presented a scene worthy of the cavalier himself. The company was enthusiastic, the food of the best, the wines beyond cavil. Mrs. Williams had suggested that Miss Anthony, as one by birth a distant connection of the house, should have the place of honor. Tommy Debbins welcomed the idea, and it was carried out. It had seemed to him that this must inevitably propitiate the ancestors. Even though he himself were an interloper, the spirits of the Cottrells must yield him credit for this delicate attention to the dignity of their blood.

He had not known until now that Miss Anthony was connected with the family, and the information aroused him to a new and unique interest in the girl. He had met her often at the various social gatherings of the neighborhood, and had escorted her to and fro in emergencies more than once, but he had regarded her with that methodical veneration which he displayed toward the whole sex, increased in this instance by the peculiar awe that

every lovely, high-bred girl inspired in his modest bosom.

There, seated at his own table, Tommy Debbins was very, very happy. He had the proud consciousness that the excellence of the dinner and of the company was a direct compliment to the manor which the ancestors must appreciate. For the moment, they were off his conscience. In addition, he was a success as host to his party. They were making merry, without shadow of doubt. He himself said nothing, as was his habit, but there was no need of effort on his part; all about the table ran a crisp fire of chatter, obscured for an instant here and there by the smoke of low-spoken scandal, broken at intervals by a leaping flame of laughter. The man on the other side of Miss Anthony, a noted *raconteur*, held her interest, and saved her from the boredom of a *tête-à-tête* with her host, while it left Tommy Debbins free to study the beauty of her profile and to meditate on the marvelous interest that invested her as one of the Cottrells.

Then, suddenly, something whirled in the heart of Tommy Debbins. Where, always before, he had regarded woman-kind as sacred of itself, a generality of the divine in flesh, he now saw her—the one woman!

She was fair and gracious, as had been many others—only, more fair, infinitely more fair, and infinitely more gracious. In her he found his abstract veneration for the sex made concrete in a personality. Miss Anthony summed up all he had ever thought concerning the worth of woman, and multiplied it. He was aghast at his own audacity in venturing to think thus intimately of a creature so superlative, but he found himself powerless to check the rush of his thoughts. It was in part due to the new identity bestowed on Miss Anthony by the housekeeper's information that she was of the Cottrell family, but it was, very probably in greater measure, the effect of the occasion. Tommy Debbins was at the head of his own table; by him sat this beautiful girl: the association almost inevitably brought to his imagination the possibility of continuing their relation and developing it. Tommy Debbins, blushing, and trembling, wondered if it might in any way be within God's gift

that Isabel Anthony should become his wife.

Though this emotion that now seized Tommy Debbins found him unprepared, its coming had been made sure by circumstance. His entire experience since his arrival at the manor had been of a sort to develop all his latent domesticity. That he had possessed the instinct was clearly shown by the readiness with which he yielded to the influences that tended toward its growth. His delight in the manor, which from the first he recognized as home, his pleasure in the modest social interchanges with the other residents, especially his profound absorption in the family of Cottrell, all revealed the fact that he was one to find his highest happiness in domestic life. His beautiful attitude toward women, and indeed his appreciation of God as a Being of Love were the final evidences of the best and deepest traits in his character. These many impelling causes had now wrought their result, and he was ripe to understand his own yearning. Therefore, as he sat in the essential position of the domestic king, at the head of his own table, dispensing his own hospitality, his vague longings crystallized into vehement purpose to make this particular girl his wife. He understood that this must be love, and, as he yielded to the tender enchantment, he felt—even he, Tommy Debbins—as has every other lover since the dawn of time, that he was at once the most miserable and the happiest of men.

The company lingered long at table. Following a growing custom of the region, the ladies remained with the men, and in a spirit of jollity several toasts were proposed with the best will in the world, if without elaborate oratory. The host was named, and in reply made a neat speech of three words, stumbling only a trifle in the delivery:

"I thank you."

Later, he conceived a daring project, the most audacious in his whole career, and carried it out triumphantly. This was nothing other than the offering of Miss Anthony's name, and her health was drunk with applause. In the excitement of the event, Tommy Debbins so far forgot caution as to swallow half a glass of champagne. The effect was immediate,

for there fell on him an inexpressible sense of desolation. He interpreted this aright, and hastily excused himself for a moment. James followed him to the library, and, at his request, brought him a powder dissolved in water, as directed by the physician for such emergencies. The result was a temporary truce with his discontented anatomy, and he returned bravely to his duties as host. There, one glance at the lovely face of Miss Anthony, and all his pangs were forgotten.

The first consequence of love was disastrous to Tommy Debbins. The unaccustomed excitement put him in bed for a week after the dinner, and his convalescence was retarded by the violence of his emotions. The gentle sway of love filled his heart with delicious warmth, but it wrought suffering for his nerves. At the same time, the ancestors harrowed both nerves and heart.

For Tommy Debbins could not assure himself as to their attitude in the affair. Surely, they would rejoice in the restoration of one of their race to the position of chatelaine. But, on the other hand, how would they feel concerning the misalliance of one of their blood with the parvenu Debbins? The unhappy wooer was sorely distressed over his conjectures on this point. In the remote recesses of his consciousness, he was convinced that the forbears would hold him forever anathema. To add to his misery, immediately on rising from his sick-bed, he came across another face in the gallery, one the little book barely mentioned, and one he had never particularly remarked hitherto. It now became his most virulent accusing demon.

This was the more extraordinary since the face itself was that of an angel. Tommy Debbins looked on it with terrified reverence. It was a portrait of the Reverend Wilton Cottrell, a clergyman of the Protestant Episcopal Church, who had devoted his life to missionary work in the city of New York. He had been an ascetic and a fanatic—one glance at the delicate, flawless features assured the intelligent observer of this—and the wonderful, glowing eyes showed that he had been, too, what all ascetics and fanatics are not, a man who lived the divine doctrine of love.



DRAWN BY JEROME UHL

Tommy Debbins was very, very happy

Tommy Debbins had seen this portrait among others, but its meaning had been hidden from him. Now, in his soul's growth, his vision was clarified, and he perceived in part the spiritual beauty that had characterized the priest. Beholding this painting, Tommy Debbins was in the throes of self-torment. Here was, indeed, the most troublesome of the ancestors. The others had surpassed him ostentatiously, on lower planes—of birth, breeding, mentality, bravery, achievement. But this pale, holy face shone before him luminous with a spiritual sovereignty. In the eyes lay the light of self-sacrifice. Before that tender glance, Tommy Debbins felt himself a being altogether useless and vile. He apprehended crudely how

this man must have lived in complete self-abnegation, seeking always to save the souls of others.

Tommy Debbins almost ran from the gallery. It seemed to him that he was altogether bound by his own lusts; his every pleasure was a care for himself; even his love was but a longing for his own happiness. That priest, who had forgotten self to toil for others, what could he think of Tommy Debbins?

By avoiding the gallery, Tommy Debbins progressed in his wooing. Circumstance was his best ally. Miss Anthony's father was abominably poor, after the later fashion of the Cottrell kin, and he effusively welcomed the timid advances of the master of the manor. His influence



with his daughter was exerted to dispose her mind favorably, and this proved no very difficult task. Isabel was proud of her blood; she was ashamed of her poverty. Her heart had been given already to a lover who was impossible from the standpoint of prudence, but the heart was of less importance to her than were the pride and the hate. She knew nothing of the horrors of loveless marriage; she knew much concerning the intolerable humiliations incurred by pretentious poverty. She was as ambitious as she was lovely, and, while she would have preferred to find the realization of her financial hopes in a personality more attractive than that of Tommy Debbins, she was by no means wholly dissatisfied with him. He was neither wise nor witty, but he was inoffensive, and he was splendidly tractable. She knew that in the future she would be able to mold him to her will. So, when, after two days in bed as a consequence of anticipating the deed, Tommy Debbins proposed to Miss Anthony, he was accepted.

Sometimes remorse touched the girl—lightly, for a moment—as she noted the adoration in her lover's eyes. But she drove this from her with the thought that, after all, if she gave him no love, she gave him herself. Then, she would sigh wistfully, for her *fiance's* tenderness toward her recalled her own tenderness toward another—whom she strove in vain to forget.

It was in the early autumn that Warren Cottrell came on a visit to the Anthonys.

Tommy Debbins first heard the news from Mrs. Williams, as he had been confined to his room for some time with vicious bronchitis.

"He's the heir," the housekeeper concluded, "as of course you know, sir."

"Eh?" Tommy Debbins exclaimed; "the heir? No, I didn't know. Er—the heir? This heir"—he waved his hand in an explanatory gesture.

"Why, yes, sir. I supposed you must have known. He's the one you bought the place from."

"No, I didn't know," Tommy Debbins repeated simply. "You see, my lawyer attended to all that."

"Well, well, bless us now, that do seem strange. Yes, the place belongs to War-

ren—that is, begging your pardon, sir, it did belong to him. But he didn't have any money, and he didn't have the gift for making it neither, as I've heard. He's a nice boy, though, and a true Cottrell."

When Mrs. Williams had left the room, Tommy Debbins groaned aloud. For months he had been buffeted by ancestors of the race of Cottrell, and now—here had risen a descendant, to reproach him for his presence in the manor. Hitherto, he had taken no thought concerning the person from whom he had secured the property. At the time of the purchase, the fact that he had bought from the heir of the family would not have affected him. But now he was ripe for a pessimistic interest in the one who had been deprived of his birthright. What would the heir think of Tommy Debbins dwelling in the home of his fathers? Mrs. Williams had said that he was nice, and "a true Cottrell." Tommy Debbins found it in his heart to wish that the heir had been a dissolute scamp. Then, he would have said to the ancestors:

"The last of your line is worthless. You may thank your stars that I've got the place instead of him."

For another great passion, besides his love for Isabel Anthony, was throbbing in the bosom of Tommy Debbins. He must strive with all his power to be worthy of his place, worthy of the Cottrells. Of course he would fall miserably short. He had nothing like their ability, nothing like their blood. But fate had joined their destiny and his, and he must endeavor, to the utmost, to fulfil his part. Having no ancestor of his own worth mentioning, he must devote his filial piety to this race, into association with which he had been thrown by hazard. He felt that his every act must be scrutinized by the cavalier, the knight, the judge, the general, and the priest. He must live, so nearly as lay within his power, as they would have him live, upholding with his puny strength the traditions of the house.

And now without warning, fell this complication as to the heir!

Worry aided the ravages of bronchitis, and Tommy Debbins had a serious illness, which lasted for three weeks. When he was convalescent, the physician spoke gravely:

"You mustn't stay here for the Winter; the climate would kill you! The wedding isn't to be until Spring. Well, you had better take a long ocean voyage—might go 'round the world, not stopping much on shore, you know. It will help your heart, too."

"Thanks," said Tommy Debbins, miserably.

A week later, the master of the manor made his first call on the Anthonys after his illness. Anxious as he always was to see the girl he loved, to-day he desired to see Warren Cottrell with an eagerness that was torture.

At first glance, as he shook hands with the heir, he started, and uttered an involuntary ejaculation. The handsome, scornful, debonair face was that of the cavalier. Yes—alas!—this was a true Cottrell. One look at him showed that he was of the race, and that he was—what Tommy Debbins could never be—an aristocrat. That he might be only a cumberer of the ground did not occur to Tommy Debbins: for this handsome youth was of the blood; he was the rightful heir of all the Cottrells.

As he turned from Warren Cottrell, Tommy Debbins caught the gaze of Isabel Anthony, who, also, was looking at her

cousin. In that instant, his heart broke, for he saw the truth.

He went away soon and quietly. At home, he dismissed James, and shut himself in the gallery. There, with all the lights blazing, he communed with the spirits of the dead. And, one and all, they told him the same thing: That he was nothing; that it must be sufficient honor for him to be permitted to serve the race of Cottrell. Last of all, the priest spoke to him softly, tenderly, solemnly, resistlessly, of self-sacrifice.

Tommy Debbins sent for his lawyer, and made a will. By its terms, he left all of his property to Isabel Anthony, with the single exception of Cottrell Manor, which was to go to Warren Cottrell—"as a proof," he explained, "of my regard for an illustrious race."

Then, when the document had been duly signed and witnessed, Tommy Debbins went again to the gallery. The portraits seemed to smile approval of his course. His eyes wandered from one to another in humble fidelity, as he spoke his thoughts aloud:

"I sha'nt go on any ocean voyage 'round the world; I'll stay right here at home for the Winter. I want to have her with me at the last, and—and I want"—his eyes met the painted faces—"to be with—you!"

## Philip's Garden

BY LEE ANDERSON

Author of "The Terrier," etc.

PHILIP knelt at the edge of the flower-bed a gardener's trowel in one hand and a large red geranium in the other, soberly contemplating his work. All the long summer forenoon he had labored on that bed. Every blending of flower and foliage was satisfying; but that one red geranium remained, and he sought earnestly for a place to put it. Already he had half remade the bed, yet could not place the one superfluous plant. His brows drew together in a troubled frown and he glared angrily at the offending geranium, wishing he had never seen it, yet hesitating to destroy it or plant it elsewhere.

He stuck his trowel into a box of rich, black earth and set the plant beside it. Then he drew from his pocket a black briar pipe, lighted it, and contentedly blew great clouds of smoke up among the branches of an overhanging maple. For a time he gazed absently over his garden; but, the red geranium happening to come within the range of vision, he started guiltily, like one caught loitering by a harsh master.

"Oh, you bothersome plant," he cried aloud. "Where shall I put you?"

And in quick response to his question, a feminine voice replied,

"I should put it in that upper corner. It would look well between the scarlet and the dark pink."

The advice came so promptly that Philip did not look around, but reached to obey. Then a quick, merry laugh reminded him that another was in his garden. Plant and trowel in hand, he turned about.

Directly back of him stood a young woman, her hands clasped behind her and her eyes surveying him critically. Philip stared at her wonderingly. She was not beautiful, but wholesome and satisfying. Her dark, wavy hair and laughing eyes held the solitary gardener silent. She endured his stare unembarrassed.

"But it will go there very nicely, you know," she said presently. "There's just room in that corner. Try it anyway."

Philip stared no more, but turned to do her bidding.

When the red geranium had been placed he regarded it carefully, then rose.

"You are right," he said. "It really belongs there. Funny I couldn't find the place before. May I smoke?"

"Surely. Is it not your garden?" laughed his unknown visitor.

"Why, yes," he stammered, unaccountably confused. "But—I—May I?—er—"

"You may. My name is Jane—and I have not had lunch."

"Oh, I beg your pardon, Miss—Miss—"

"Call me 'Jane.'"

"—Jane," cried Philip. "Will you lunch with me?"

"Thank you, I will."

"I have no housekeeper and shall have to do the cooking myself, but—"

"I sha'n't mind at all. Such a good gardener should be a good cook. The whole place is like an enchanted garden; surely a man may cook in a land of enchantment. Take me into the fairy-house."

And so Philip dumbly led the way, the unknown Jane following closely. The owner of the garden was deeply wondering how she had got upon his property. The gate was locked, he knew; it was always so. The picket-fence about the garden and little house was high and sharp; she couldn't have climbed in. He rather resented her intrusion; he could not bring himself to call it trespass, yet he was not altogether sorry that she had come. But

how had she come? He was on the point of asking her, when she suddenly cried, as if a great offense had been done,

"I don't know your name!"

"It is Philip Mayo," he said soberly; then added with a laugh, "Jane."

"So! I like 'Philip'; I shall call you that." She regarded him frankly. "Mayo is not bad; it sounds like a poet's name, or a romantic actor's. But I shall call you 'Philip.'"

"I am neither; and I sha'n't mind if you do call me 'Philip.'"

Then they entered the house. Jane threw aside a big straw hat which hung by a pink ribbon about her neck, and sank into a chair.

"My, but I am tired. And bearishly hungry, Philip. Will you hurry the lunch?"

"Yes, Jane; will you find something to do?"

"I shall watch you cook. I like to see men cook. They can always make coffee poorly, scramble eggs well, and broil steak abominably. What can you do? No, don't answer; I know you can't do it well, whatever it is—Oh, the dear kitchen! Isn't it pretty? What an orderly man you are, Philip. You are too orderly; I fear you are a bachelor, possibly a woman-hater. No? Then help me upon that table like a good Philip—There. Now what shall we have for lunch?"

While Philip busied himself about the kitchen and dining-room, Jane sat upon the table, sometimes in silence, sometimes babbling about his home, his cooking, and everything which her active eyes sought out. It was like a happy picnic. They seemed to have known each other always. They laughed and sang with the freedom of old friends—or children. At the table, Jane presided with the air of a queen, the mistress of a hundred servants. Philip was her slave. Strangely, he was a willing slave; he, the sober, cynical philosopher, the dignified botanist, danced attendance upon this unknown woman like one to the manner born.

"Tell me," he said as they lingered over their dessert of fruit, "Who are you?"

"Listen," she replied soberly. "That's a secret. I sha'n't tell you."

Then she laughed and ran from the house. Her levity annoyed Philip, but he

followed her into the garden, swinging her big, floppy hat and wondering at the strangely sweet odor which lurked about it.

For an hour they wandered about Philip's little flower-farm, pausing now and then to fondle a rose or to rest upon one of the moss-covered benches. To Philip, who had known few women, it was an hour in fairy-land. The presence of his unknown companion permeated the air so that he inhaled it with every breath. He followed her happily, sympathized with her little sentiments, forgot his own cynicisms.

But the summer-sun was creeping behind the gable of the little house and Jane cried in mock terror,

"Oh, it is so late. I must go; instantly!"

"Ah, whence and whither—?" quoted Philip.

"No one knows," finished Jane, and added, laughing, "nor shall one know, you would-be purloiner of secrets."

Philip started for the gate, humbled.

"Stop!" commanded the girl. "You shall not spy upon me. Face to the east, like a Mohammedan."

Philip stood as the girl directed. Jane came close behind him and laid her hands upon his shoulders.

"Now be a good boy. Stand that way and count to one hundred, single numbers surely, and no cheating. If you are good, maybe I'll come again. Good-by."

Philip heard a rustling of skirts, a merry laugh; then all was silent. Faithfully he counted to one hundred, and when he turned, his visitor was gone.

The owner of the garden sighed, and touched the spot where her hand had rested upon him like one expecting to find a jewel of great price, a flower of wondrous beauty, or a mark of some kind remaining there. The garden was very empty without her and seemed silent as death when her voice no longer rang among the trees. Philip sank upon a bench and drew forth his pipe. She was gone; only Lady Nicotine remained to keep him company.

But how was she gone? Philip jumped to his feet. He found the gate still locked; she could not have gone that way. He walked around the high picket-fence which enclosed his little tract; there was no opening. She could not have gone under, and it was

impossible that she had gone over. That would have been a task even for Philip. He returned to his bench more mystified than ever. Was she a fairy, a phantom lady? No. Philip Mayo, botanist, was no dreamer of children's dreams; and besides, she had been distinctly material when Philip lifted her upon the table in his little kitchen.

And so the owner of the garden spent the rest of the long Summer-afternoon among the flowers, of which she had seemed one, trying to solve the mystery. When the shadows began to lengthen, he went again to the house. The odor of her still lingered there. But she was gone, and the rooms seemed incomprehensibly large and empty without her. He prepared and ate his evening-meal without zest, and he looked often at the chair opposite, expecting to hear her voice. She was a seemingly ubiquitous creature; she was in his house everywhere, and yet she was not.

Philip rose the next morning with the sun; he was keen for his work in the garden. Yet when he knelt, trowel in hand, among his plants his interest waned. Even the *dionaea muscipula*, which held between the deadly lobes of one of its leaves a still faintly protesting bumblebee was no attraction. The botanist's thoughts and eyes wandered among the trees, over the fence, and into the forest just beyond. Every rustling of the leaves stirred him to attention.

All through the morning he waited impatiently. He was too unrestful to work; too sober to play. At last he went into his house, but it was no better there. He was angry that a mere girl—an unknown, frivolous, whimsical girl—should so interfere with the routine of his bachelor-life. The world was very blue and the botanist dawdled over his meal without appetite.

"What ho, Sir Philip!" cried a voice from the garden. "Do you remain within on such a glorious day?"

Philip leaped from his chair and ran to the door. The world had suddenly become rose-hued, and the dignified botanist laughed happily, like a careless child.

"I had begun to think you were not coming," he cried.

"I knew it."

"Why did you torture me, then?"



"It did torture you? I thought it would."

Philip flushed; he had not meant to say so much.

"It did not really torture me, but I was curious to—"

"Liar!" exclaimed Jane. "It did torture you—but I am hungry. Will you feed me?"

Philip's appetite suddenly revived. Again the little white house assumed a festal air, and its owner sang blithely as he worked for the girl enthroned upon his kitchen-table.

All the afternoon the two played about Philip's garden, now reading, now pottering among the flowers, and more often, just talking. Philip had never realized how beautiful his garden was until Jane came into it. He had never known what pleasing creatures women were until she laughed and sang for him. But now the hours in the garden with her passed all too quickly. Too soon the shadows began to lengthen. It seemed a pitifully short while until Jane again told him to face the east.

"Please don't go," he pleaded; "it is still early."

"Early I know, but very improper. We haven't even been introduced. What would my stern parent say?"

Philip looked at her aghast. He had not thought of that before; it seemed so natural for her to be in his garden. Jane laughed gayly at his perplexity.

"There is no help for it; face Mecca!"

"But mayn't I call? I could—"

"O-o-h, it would never do then."

"At least tell me—"

"No, I shall not. Quickly; face the east. The evil jinnée will turn me to stone if you don't." She came close to him. "I'll come again, if you like."

"Like! I—"

"Mecca, quickly! Face Mecca!" she laughed. "Good-by."

Again she was gone and the garden seemed even more empty than before she had come.

The next day, Philip waited very patiently until lunch-time. He prepared the meal and set the table for two, but Jane did not come. As the afternoon dragged on, the botanist became depressed and irritable. He tried to read, but cast his book aside

impatiently. His pipe tasted bitter, and the garden smelled stale. He listened and looked anxiously for some sign of his visitor, but the sun sank and she came not to Philip's garden.

In the evening he sat in the star-lighted grove and dreamed; he, the practical Philip, actually dreamed, and of a girl whom he did not know and who wore a big, floppy straw hat and left the subtle odor of her presence even in the perfumed garden. Far into the night he smoked and wondered whether she were woman or elf. Then, as the dawn began to tint the eastern sky, he threw himself upon the floor of his study and dreamed long of a beautiful princess who came to an enchanted castle and by her love, released a prince who was languishing there.

He awoke more irritable, more depressed than he had been the day before. Then the force of habit arose within him. He cast the unknown intruder from his thoughts and went back to his garden, the silent inhabitants of which were never whimsical, but always soothing and loyal. But try as he would to put Jane out of his mind, there still lurked within him a longing for her. Brand her what he would—torment, elf, tease, and deceiver—he could not but wish her in his garden. He could not keep his mind concentrated upon his plants; he was restless, and his thoughts rambled about the grove instead of fixing themselves upon the wonders of nature.

Then he arose from his work, left his garden, and stalked down the road. He would find that woman and tell her never to enter his garden again. He would call her trifler, deceiver; he would bar her from his life and return to his work, alone and happy.

At a dozen houses of people who came to the hills for the summer, and of a score of natives, he asked about his unknown visitor. None had seen a person of such an appearance; none knew a young woman named Jane. But all twitted Philip about his curiosity; all asked why the dignified bachelor-botanist was so anxious to locate a mere woman. And Philip became cross and sulky. He decided that all people were fools, and most positively he called Jane a rogue, a mischief, a wicked gnome perhaps.



It was noon when he entered the cabin of his friend the Philosopher, which was deep in the forest. To that sage man he confessed his aberration and of him sought sympathy. The philosopher only laughed.

"We must all love sometime," he said. "Why should you not love this girl?"

"But I do not love her," cried Philip in perturbation. "She is a wicked woman, a trifler, a veritable scamp; she came to my garden unbid; she disturbed me and hindered my work, and now she—she—well, bothers me."

"Our loves usually come unbid," said the sage one, "not only into our gardens but into our hearts."

"I—do—not—love her," said Philip, nettled.

"Yet she bothers you, disturbs your peace, interferes with your work!"

"Her name is Jane, you say. That's a wholesome name, rather a pretty one—old fashioned, good, loving, and true. My wife's name was Jane. She can't be a very wicked girl."

"You are an old dotard," cried Philip in anger. "You do not understand the case at all. If I see the woman again I shall tell her to trespass no more upon my property."

And the botanist grabbed his hat and stamped from the cabin, the laugh of the philosopher ringing in his ears.

"And so," cried a voice behind him, "you have been out spying upon me."

The botanist jumped to his feet and faced the cause of all his unrest, the object of all his anger.

"Woman," he cried, "where have you come from? How do you know I have been spying?"

Jane laughed gayly.

"I like you when you are cross," she whispered irrelevantly.

"Answer me, woman! Who are you and where have you come from?"

"Booh!" the girl shuddered. "So savage; so terrible! I shall not tell you."

"I am serious," roared Philip. "Why do you come to my garden, distracting me from my work and irritating me with your frivolity? I did not ask you here; I do not want you here. You are a wicked woman, an adventuress. Leave this garden. I never want to see you hereafter."

The girl's face sobered and flushed. She said nothing, but looked at Philip with pleading eyes.

"Go!" he cried, "and come no more."

Two great tears welled up and ran over Jane's cheeks; her mouth quivered.

"You mean to send me away so! You don't—don't like me—any more?" she breathed hoarsely, half-sobbing. "I—surely I did not mean to—to—bother you. I—I came because the garden was—is—so pretty, and I—like you."

"Oh, girl, girl," cried the botanist, and caught her into his arms. "I don't want you to go; I want you to stay. I love you; I love you. I must have you, no matter who you are. I love you."

Jane smiled up at him through her tears.

"I knew it," she whispered.

Philip, glaring, held her at arm's length.

"Woman," he cried, "are you trifling with me? Have you been acting?"

"I love you," said the girl, and kissed the hand which held her away.

"Then I shall marry you at once," said Philip.

"I expected you would," laughed Jane, and ran to the man and kissed him before the angry words could be spoken.

And so they walked to the village to be made man and wife. Philip signed in the big register in the justice's office; then turned to Jane.

"You must tell me now," he said.

"No," the girl replied, "not even now. I shall write in the book, but you must promise not to read until I give permission—Promise?"

"But, my dear, you—"

"I can, too. And I shall, else I sha'n't marry you."

And the botanist, being very much in love, did as she wished, receiving a license to marry a woman he did not know. Then they found a minister, were married, and walked back to Philip's garden.

"I know who you are now," said the man. "You are my wife, Mrs. Philip Mayo."

"Yes, and I like being Mrs. Mayo. I told you it was a nice name."

Then the girl looked at the sun and saw it sinking behind Philip's house.

"Oh, but it is late. I must go."

"Go? You can't go; you are my wife."

"Yes, I know, dear, but think of my stern parent. Come, be a good boy, face Mecca, and I'll come in the morning."

In vain Philip protested. The girl faced him to the east, and before he recovered from his surprise, was gone.

Then was the botanist more discontented than ever. He vainly tried to sleep, but could not, and rising, sat in the scented garden until dawn, when he went within the house to dress for the coming of his bride. But tired nature was the stronger and he fell asleep at his dressing-table.

Into his dreams intruded a voice crying. "Laggard! Laggard! Up, you sleepy one!" and Philip rose, hurriedly dressed, and went forth to meet his wife.

That was a day of days. The two worked in the garden, played at housekeeping, and dreamed rosy dreams until the bright summer-sun was far below the gables of the little white house. They sat together in the garden over a lunch long since forgotten, and whispered of the wonders of love. The botanist drank in the odor and freshness of his bride more eagerly than ever he had that of his flowers. His cynical philosophy was forgotten; the whimsicality of Jane was lost in her present sweetness.

The sun sank and the lovers dreamed on in the dusk. The shades of night crept among the trees and cool winds rustled the flowers.

"The evil jinnee of the cold is jealous, my husband," whispered Jane. "Will you get me a shawl?"

Philip rose to do her bidding. Never distrusting, he started for the house. But scarcely had he disappeared behind the tall bushes, than Jane arose and ran through the grove. Her husband heard her flight and ran in pursuit. Just a glimpse of white he caught; then his bride was lost in the darkness.

On he plunged, through flower beds and shrubbery, but found no trace of his wife. Then he started a systematic tour of his property, following the high fence. And so he found, upon one of the pickets, a piece of lace fluttering in the night-wind and, near the fence, a little lilac tree whose branches formed a convenient aid to getting over the barrier. He climbed the fence and leaped to the other side, and there among the weeds and leaves

lay Jane, faintly moaning. All of Philip's anger was instantly forgotten.

"You are hurt," he cried.

"Yes, my husband, I fell. I fear my ankle is sprained. But I knew you would come for me."

Philip picked her up and, being more in love than ever, carried her where she directed, through the forest and over the hill. At last, he stumbled out of the darkness of the trees and into a clearing. Before him a cabin loomed faintly against the clouds.

"Knock at the door," commanded Jane, and Philip kicked loudly against the panel. There was a stirring within and a light shone faintly through the keyhole. Then the latch clicked, the door was thrown open, and there, candle in hand, stood the Philosopher.

"You?" cried Philip.

"Who else?" asked the Philosopher.

Jane buried her face in Philip's shoulder and the botanist heard her laughing softly. Understanding had come at last, and his face flushed darkly.

"Are you this woman's father?" he shouted at the Philosopher, and that person nodded affirmatively.

"Then hear that she is a liar, a deceiver, a mischief. She has tortured me for five days, and has lived a lie before me during the whole time. And you, too, whom I have called my friend, have lived a lie to me. You, too, are in the miserable plot. Well, we were married yesterday. Have you anything to say, sir?"

The sage one shaded the light with his hand, stepped to Philip and whispered,

"I know all that she is. You deserve all you get for being no wiser than you are." And the Philosopher chuckled softly.

Philip turned without a word and strode from the cabin and back through the forest.

Jane stirred in his arms.

"Say nothing, woman," he cried sternly. "You have made a fool of me and I have reaped a fool's reward. But I love you; I am glad to be a fool."

"I knew you would make me stay with you," whispered Jane. "And dear, if you are tired, I will walk. My ankle isn't—"

"Hush," said Philip. "It is well that I love you," and carried her on through the woods to his garden.

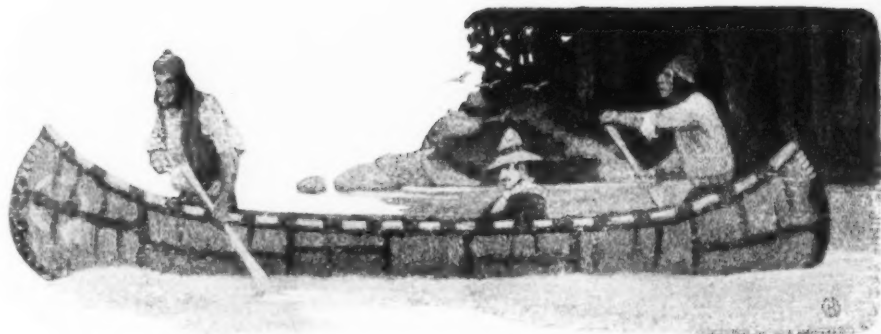


ILLUSTRATION BY SIDNEY H. BIESZBERG

I idly watched the long sweep of the bowman's paddle

## Gray Wolf and His Falling Star

BY MARSHALL PUTNAM THOMPSON

Author of "An Uncertainty of the Law," etc.

UMPH!" said the man in the bow.

"Umph!" said the man in the stern.

"Which means—" said I.

"Umph!" said the man in the bow again and "umph" said the man in the stern. It was all I could get out of either, so I resigned myself to silence.

We entered a long lane of absolutely dark, still water, walled on either side by the forest and roofed by the branches of the pine and hemlock. I lay on the bottom of the canoe and idly watched the long sweep of the bowman's paddle and the flicker of light, rippling on his shoulders.

Back and forth swept the paddle with rhythmic cadence, but neither drip nor splash was apparent as it entered or left the river; the ripple of light ebbed and flowed in perfect time to the sweep of the paddle.

A hundred miles behind us lay Lake Abitibi and the new mines of cobalt that had turned the attention of Wall and State Street to the long discredited mineral wealth of Canada—wealth, that neither paddler nor their fellows, though they swept up the rivers for years or traveled the trails for a lifetime, would ever see or use.

Behind Lake Abitibi, a hundred miles and more, was Ottawa, but even Ottawa was ignorant how to use its own, and beyond Ottawa were the bustling states; and it

was from there, that the power came that moved the paddler and made the shoulders ripple under the flickering light.

Ahead, unknown, except to the wandering *courier du bois*, untracked, save here and there by some obscure agent of the great company—br-r-r the canoe must have grated for a moment on a rock.

"Umph!" came again from the stern.

The man in the bow lifted his paddle, but so cleanly and swiftly that not a single drop fell from it. He held the paddle across the boat above his knees; the canoe swerved and pointed toward the bank.

Against the darkening tree-trunks, the figure of a man became dimly apparent—a figure tall and lithe, gaunt and sinewy—an Indian, but an Indian out of the pages of "Leatherstocking—" but old, the grandfather of every Indian that ever was.

My Indians, those that paddled and those that threaded the trails and helped at the portages, were fat and oozy, good for a day's work and knowing the North, but trousered and shirted and even hatted, and as the guide said, "mostly French." The figure on the bank was different; he was real Indian.

"Umph!" grunted the man at the bow. "Gray Wolf!"

He said it as the subaltern at a mess-dinner says "The king!" A moment more and he sprang lightly overboard, but the

stern-man's paddle held the boat as rigid as if the canoe were a ten thousand ton liner at her East River dock.

The real Indian, without noticing either the men or myself, stepped lightly from the shadow. A rifle was held in the crook of his arm, a blanket was draped over his shoulder. In a moment he had entered the canoe, found a place among the packs forward, the bowman again entered, again the paddles rose and fell, and again, the canoe glided onward up river, pointing north.

"Cool and casual and blamed superior," I thought to myself. You would, too, wouldn't you? Supposing your driver says "Umph," stops your hansom-cab on Broadway—your own hansom-cab, you know, and a stranger out of a dime-museum steps in with never a "by your leave" even, and your driver just drives on again—wouldn't you think it cool and casual; of course you would. You would probably say things; but up here in the North, you don't say so much. I didn't say anything, but lit my pipe and lay still. I suppose that when the Gray Wolf found I was smoking, he would smoke also or ask for "tobac"—cheeky devils, these Indians—but he didn't. He sat there like a wooden Indian in front of a cigar-store.

Still the canoe went northward, the shadows grew darker, the sun went down, and the chill of the twilight drifted upon us from the bank, as the stars yellowed out overhead. We rounded a bend; on the river bank beyond, were three other canoes, those of our companions, and on the shore, a camp-fire was already smoking and crackling and sending its sparks flying upward at the base of a cliff.

As we reached the bank, Gray Wolf stepped out and stalked away toward the cliff, the only one I had seen on our journey—it was a dark, forbidding-looking rock, probably of iron, and I looked at it with interest or rather hoped it might mean interest to my Wall Street employers, who had asked me to locate, in four August weeks, all the ore prospects in a territory about as large as the United States east of Cleveland.

"I suppose Mr. Gray Wolf is afraid he'll be asked to work," said I to the nearest Indian.

"Umph!" said he.

A few moments later and I had eaten my bacon, drank my coffee, again lit my pipe, and was idly lying back in my blankets, wishing most profoundly that I had some one to talk to about the market. The black cliff loomed, as elevations will at night, and looking at it closely I could make out a tall figure standing at the summit facing to the north.

I touched the nearest Indian and pointed.

"Gray Wolf," he said sullenly.

"Your scintillating remarks," said I, "are illuminating to my somewhat dull understanding. But who is Gray Wolf?"

"Umph!" said the Indian.

"Darn all barbarians, Chinamen, and niggers," said I, bound to assert the white man's superiority.

"Umph!" said the Indian again.

After this I dozed off a little; but now and then I would rouse up, and every time I did so, I saw Gray Wolf standing on top of the cliff, looking north.

Suddenly I woke in earnest and sat bolt upright. The fire had burned low, there was not an Indian in sight, and here and there, about the base of the cliff, I thought I saw shadowy figures. Of course, someone was coming; I've seen the Indians vamoose that way before—hereditary instinct, I suppose.

Now, I couldn't hear anything, but I knew the fellows were all lying close in the underbrush and that somebody was coming.

In a moment he came, walking into the circle of the fire as if stepping into his barracks. I knew him, too; he was Sergeant Gordon of the Northwestern Mounted Police. I could see the maple leaf in his belt buckle. Now the Northwestern Mounted Police isn't altogether in the Northwest, but is generally most everywhere, and it doesn't always go mounted, so I wasn't very much surprised.

He was as belted and stiff and clean-shaven and altogether fit as if he weren't three weeks from civilization and a barber; looked as if he had been standing at attention five minutes before, at Sir Wilfrid's room in Ottawa.

Indeed, I will back the English official



of any class to be fit at all times, under any conditions, anywhere, against the world. You go sweating through an Indian jungle for a month, and at the end, you find a dull, pink-cheeked, young gentleman, deputy-something or other, drinking whisky and soda on a cool piazza, absolutely immaculate in white linen, when there isn't a laundry in a thousand miles and the thermometer is two hundred in the shade; or you ride three weeks up a river in British Guiana, rowed by black men in breech clouts, and at the end of your journey, find another deputy-something or other, who rules fifty square miles of monkeys and alligators, and you'll find Mr. Twin-brother of the man you met in India, and he'll be sitting down to dinner in full evening-togs and the nearest white man, except yourself, a thousand miles away; and you will have a three weeks' growth on your chin and be wearing a dirty gray flannel shirt.

Why, I've seen the only white man in another thousand miles some Jack British official in Uganda, where it costs a hundred dollars to bring in a cake of soap and another hundred to transport a tooth-brush, attending a nigger-chief's wedding to his nineteenth wife, in a tall silk hat and a rock-coat and wearing lavender gloves—yes, sir, lavender gloves. I tell you, it's the dress-shirt that keeps the British Empire in all its power, together.

Well, Gordon came tramping in, careless as you please, takes out a white linen handkerchief and flicks at the polish on his boots—force of habit, you know—no dust north of the something or other parallel.

"Hullo, Gordon," says I. "Last time I saw you, you were arresting a man in Dawson."

"Hullo, yourself," says he. "Got a light? Floated any more wild-cat mines?"

I passed him a brand, he lit his pipe, and we sat down and we both smoked. By and by, the Indians stole back, but all looked kind of ugly and glum, and up on the cliff still stood Gray Wolf, looking to the north.

"What's up?" I said, finally. "A thief? Hope he's a poor paddler."

"No—worse!" said Gordon, as quietly as if asking for another light. Then he shook out the ashes from his pipe and

crammed more tobacco into the bowl, but I noticed he kept his eyes on the Indians.

"The devil!" said I. "One of—" I lifted my pipe and waved it toward the men.

"No!" said Gordon. "Gray Wolf!"

I pointed to the cliff.

"Yes," said Gordon, "I noticed him. there's no hurry; can't go back till morning. He promised to meet me here—he promised to meet me here!" he repeated, and he said it in a marked manner. I looked up; the Indians had drawn somewhat nearer.

"If he hadn't," continued Gordon, quietly, "your faithful followers wouldn't let me go back."

"Gordon," said I, "you are mostly an oyster, but open up. What's he done and why did he do it?"

Gordon yawned.

"Do you know," he said, and now his intonation had the twang of St. Andrews University, "that man has committed murder, murdered his daughter, you know, because—"

"Hy?" said I.

"Because," said Gordon, "he's a poet."

"Rat's—he's a buck Indian!" said I.

"He's a great man," said Gordon. "You look at his face when he comes down and his head. Ever see Gladstone?"

"No," said I. "Besides, he's out of politics for good; he's dead. What about Gray Wolf?"

"Well," drawled Gordon, "I saw Gladstone at Oxford when he was very much alive and gave the first Roman E. S. lecture in '92. I was visiting there. Do you know, old Gray Wolf's head and face are just Indianized Gladstone, but Gladstone had wrinkles in his face, three inches deep—Bulgaria made one, Majuba Hill made one, Gordon and the Soudan made one, and the Irish made several."

"Well?" said I.

"Well," said Gordon, "'Pon my word, I think old Gray Wolf has had in his day about as much on his hands as Gladstone and he hasn't a wrinkle."

"Nonsense!" said I.

"I've heard that Gray Wolf," continued Gordon, smiling at me genially, "back, I think it was in old Sir John's time, faced the British commissioner about the rights of his people and the rights of the Hudson





DRAWN BY SIDNEY H. RIESENBERG

Up on the cliff stood Gray Wolf looking to the north.

Bay Company for four days, and blessed if he didn't get the best of 'em and they were not just politicians, you know, but great lawyers—scholars, too—who knew history and had read documents and understood everything from the time of King Charles to date, and intended the Hudson Bay people should get everything they could."

"But Bulgaria, Majuba Hill, have, you know," said I. "Oh, bosh!"

"Very well—bosh!" said Gordon. "But those wrinkles came to Gladstone because he wouldn't let England go to war. Newspapers make wrinkles. Old Gray Wolf kept his people out of war for fifty years and faced tomahawks and scalping knives and forty thousand drunken red followers, all clamoring for a fight—didn't know there were so many Indians in Canada—did you?"

"No!" said I.

"There are," said Gordon, "and more, but there's been no Little Big Horn here, nor Seventh Cavalry wipe-out or slaughtered Custer."

"But your government and you fellows," said I, "you manage better."

"Rats!" said Gordon. "Government nothing! Politicians alike everywhere—people wanting mines and lands and timber everywhere! Government be blowed, Northwestern Mounted Police be blowed, it has been Gray Wolf!"

He relapsed into silence and puffed away at his pipe. Gray Wolf still stood on the cliff.

"He was a thinker, was Gray Wolf," said Gordon, after some moments. "But Indian way, though a son-of-a-gun, when he was a young man, led scalping parties all over the continent, from here to Mexico. Even took a fall out of Sheridan, just after your Civil War times; outgeneraled him, by gad, but he thought the whole thing out and saw it was no use. Saw him once in Mon real, standing on a street corner, just as he is standing up there, for five solid hours—never moving. Street gamins didn't phaze him, bobbies couldn't move him. When they would speak to him, he would show his teeth and growl, and they'd apologize. Finally there was a regular blockade of traffic, people stopping to watch him, ye know."

Again silence and again the puff of tobacco smoke.

"They sent me down to move him," said Gordon, in a minute or so. "I was just in from Winnipeg and knew his kind. 'What is it,' I asked him, when I reached his corner. 'Counting,' he said. Blowed if he hadn't been standing there all day counting noses, so he could stand up by some council-fire way up north and say to a lot of rampaging drunkards: 'Make peace! On such and such a street, in the white man's country, passed every hour, for five hours, so many people. I myself know this, I counted them.' He didn't do that for fun, either," said Gordon. "It hurt his pride like the devil to stand there and be stared at. He is a gentleman, is Gray Wolf, but Indian."

"He walked into my canoe without 'by your leave,'" said I.

"Um!" said Gordon.

He muttered something to one of the Indians; the latter walked off, and came back with a Navajo blanket.

"Left in your canoe by Gray Wolf," said Gordon. "Brought all the way from New Mexico; paid his passage, you see."

"And you are after him?"

"Yes, I wish I wasn't."

"Well?" said I.

"Well," said Gordon.

He stretched out his legs, pulled a pack under his head, folded his hand behind his neck, and drawled out his story.

"Gray Wolf married late in life," he began, "a young girl, and pretty, for an Indian, but she didn't stay pretty long. Hard work dried her up and flattened her out and wrinkled her and treated her as it does all of them. The squaws, you know, lug the loads and build the camps, bear papposes and tote 'em, chop wood, roast in summer and freeze in winter, and it raises sin with their looks, not to mention their tempers."

I nodded.

"Old Gray Wolf thought this was all right and proper," continued Gordon, "because, as I say, he was Indian, but he didn't like to see his squaw getting so homely. Once, you know, they say he went to a governor-general's reception—perhaps it was Aberdeen, perhaps Lorne, perhaps

somebody else, I don't know—anyway, Madame or lady Somebody-or-other, governor-general's wife, any way, was really pretty—pink cheeks, bright eyes and all, and over forty. 'How old,' says Gray Wolf, when he met her, and 'pon my word, she answered him honest—strange, wasn't it—but people, even women—white women—never lied much to Gray Wolf."

Gordon looked up again at the figure on the cliff.

"Too good a man to be hanged," he muttered.

"Gray Wolf stalks off to Lorne or Aberdeen or whoever it was! 'How you do it,' says he. 'What?' says the governor-general. 'Keep her young,' says Gray Wolf. 'Paint—eh—where you buy him?' The governor-general laughed. 'It's because I do the work; she has a good time—it's our way,' says he. 'Hump!' says Gray Wolf. A week or two later, he is up in northern Kewar-teen—part of Quebec then and looks at his squaw as she makes the fire. 'How old?' he says. She is flattered by the attention, but she lies. 'Twenty,' she says. 'Lie,' says Gray Wolf. 'Thirty, too late—old woman.' At that she laughs and says something to him, and old Gray Wolf looks startled, but his eyes twinkle and he orders the camp to stay right there. Things of a domestic nature were going to happen."

I glanced up at the cliff. Still the figure stood there, but the whole north seemed aflame with the aurora borealis.

"Ought to be some meteors to-night," said Gordon. "It's the middle of August—lots of 'em fall hereabout—and that reminds me—"

Again he puffed at his pipe. In a minute, however, he began to speak again.

"Gray Wolf, you know is quite a medicine-man. Indians think he's two hundred years old, but he isn't, and after he'd been in camp some months, he calls together the wise men and they cut dogs open and look at their insides and squint at the moon over witch-hazel sticks and say it will be a girl and that the squaw will die. 'Then what?' says Gray Wolf. They tell him that the squaw will wait for him in the happy hunting grounds and work hard, making ready for him, and cut wood and make things comfortable. 'Grow any older?'

says Gray Wolf. 'No,' they tell him. 'Any younger?' 'No,' again. She'd stay just the age she went. 'And girl pappoose,' says Gray Wolf. It appears that if she dies, she'd stay just at same age also. 'Umph,' says Gray Wolf. And that night, a little girl is born to him and the mother dies and no wonder, and old Gray Wolf never shedding a tear and carrying the baby, goes to the wigwam door, that he may name the child from the first thing he sees. It was an August night like this and the Aurora was blazing away in the north and out of the heavens shot a meteor. 'Nan-to-Goonah,' says Gray Wolf; and so the baby was called Nan-to-Goonah—Falling Star—pretty name, wasn't it?"

"Yes," said I, "but go on, tell the rest."

"Well," said Gordon, "Little Falling Star was the prettiest child, Indian or white, I ever saw in my life—really pretty. She had dimples, by gad—dimples in an Indian, think of it; she had glossy black hair and big black eyes and a cheek as soft and oval and rosy as—as—well, as any blamed thing—and Gray Wolf went daffy over her. Nea ly ruined his standing with the tribes. Always had her dressed in white doe skin, got her a Navajo blanket from New Mexico—believe it's that very one he left in the canoe—had an eagle's feather for her hair, and actually talked and played with her. Every time, on his travels—he took her from tribe to tribe, from the lakes to the Arctic Circle, he was a privileged character, you know—he met a squaw totting fire-wood or hoeing corn, old Gray Wolf would look at Nan-to-Goonah and growl like a mastiff. Later on, when she was growing up and was twelve or fourteen, he would fairly run off the reservation any lad or young man, white or Indian that came near her. By this time, Falling Star was known to half the continent, and the fame of her beauty, which I tell you, was quite remarkable, traveled to the cities and now and then, some artist "Johnny" would wander up beyond Great Slave, where Gray Wolf mostly lived, and try to sketch her; but not one of the artists ever saw her, for Gray Wolf would have her out of sight before Mr. Artist got beyond the Gateneau. Old Gray Wolf had a secret service like the Czar of Russia. Bah! it's cold; give me a blanket!"

Gordon rolled the blanket round him and looked up at Gray Wolf again.

"Well," he continued, "the old women got after Gray Wolf about this time and told him that Falling Star ought to get married. She'd be disgraced if she passed her seventeenth year single, but Gray Wolf barked at them and they left him alone for a while; but the idea stuck in his mind, and every young buck that wandered into camp was looked over as closely by Gray Wolf as a millionaire sophomore from Harvard by a managing mamma at Newport. Along that spring, Gray Wolf stalks into Ottawa and with him Falling Star. Gray Wolf goes up and calls on the governor-general and talks to him as an equal, too—one great gentlemen come to ask another's advice, you know, about his daughter. So the governor-general talks schools and convents and goes himself, by gad, with the old Indian to this place and that, to look 'em over; but Gray Wolf didn't like the school-teachers—I guess they happened on a lot of vinegar-faced ones—some with blue glasses and many with thin noses and angular arms—you know the kind."

I nodded

Gordon laughed and went on.

"'Hump!' says Gray Wolf, 'study, like work, dries 'em up, makes 'em old, not for Falling Star.' Pretty good—eh—ought to see some of the Girton girls."

"Oh, go on!" said I.

Sergeant Gordon did so.

"Then he told this governor-general," continued Gordon, "about that governor-general's wife who didn't grow old because she didn't work; and this governor-general told Gray Wolf that that time was now all passed and gone, and he thought he'd have some fun by telling Gray Wolf a cock-and-bull story about the new woman movement, saying, nowadays, the white women all supported their husbands, not realizing that Gray Wolf was Indian and would take it all in dead earnest—and why not? He was one great gentleman come to see another about his daughter. 'Humph!' he said, 'No white man for Falling Star.' But he looked kind of sorry. Well, by this time everybody got interested in Falling Star, and they had her and Gray Wolf—she in her

white doe skins and he in his blanket—up to Government House to a ball, and, by gad, you can believe me or not, she was the prettiest girl that had shown up at Government House for ten years. Honorable Archie Colquhoun, *aide-de-camp*,



DRAWN BY SIDNEY H. RIESENBERG

Falling Star stood beside him

Coldstream Guards, all that and more, was quite off his head about her—drank too much fizz and asked her hand of Gray Wolf. 'Um!' said he. 'You rich!' 'Yes,' says Archie. 'She have to work,' says Gray Wolf, and the spirit of mischief got into Archie and he told him, 'Yes'—that he hopes she's a good cook, and Gray Wolf growls at him and Archibald, of a sudden, goes white and goes out, shaking like a leaf. 'Thought he'd tommyhawk me,' says Archie; 'what eyes he has.' Well, back goes Gray Wolf to the North, and with him, Falling Star. When they get back to camp, the old women bring up the marriage-question again. Falling Star will be disgraced if she isn't married by her seventeenth year and that's close at hand. Even Gray Wolf can't fight against the conventions of society where he was raised, so he gives in and sends out word he will give a feast and that to the feast shall come all who would wed Falling Star. Then he pitches a lodge with doors west and east—he builds a fire, and draws a circle, and awaits his guests."

Gordon looked drawn and grim, and he told the rest of the story slowly—he evidently didn't like the ending of it.

"Jove! How they trooped in! Government sent me up to keep an eye on them. Iroquois, and Ojibbeway, Black foot, Sioux, and Comanche, and even an Esquimaux—our Indians and your Indians—how they got over the border, I don't know, but they came—for all knew or had heard of Gray Wolf and of Falling Star and were bound to gain the honor of the alliance, if they could. So they gathered and they ate a great feast. Bow-wows were slaughtered by hundreds—it was a great occasion—then they had foot-races and pony-races and had a pow-wow dance and danced till they dropped, and then each young buck and brave made an oration—told of murders and outrages and enough other things to make your hair stand on end, just to show what a broth of a boy each thought he was. Of course they lied, but some stories were true, and I found that the Northwestern Mounted Police didn't know all that was happening up in the woods, by a jug-full; but I was bound, in honor, to Gray Wolf, not to use the information.

Then the bucks boasted of their wealth and offered ponies and blankets and dogs and I don't know what, and old Gray Wolf sat grim and silent and listened. They got roaring full at the end, and Gray Wolf looked at the yelling, dirty drunkards and then at Falling Star, where she sat laughing in the wigwam behind him, and scowled like a thunder-cloud.

"Well, they had a long smoke and slept the long sleep, and at dawn came before Gray Wolf, as he stood at the door of his lodge, for his decision. He stood there, holding the curtain of the wigwam in his hand, half-open. 'Falling Star!' said he, and the girl came and stood beside him, brushing the sleep from her eyes, and a grunt went down the sodden line of faces in front. Gray Wolf looked at them and then at Falling Star, and if ever a man's face showed loathing and disgust and scorn, it was Gray Wolf's. 'She is young,' he said to them, 'She laughs—she laughs with her lips shut.' He touched her dimples. 'The laughter is always here,' he touched his breast. 'If she marries, she will work, she will not laugh—you will beat her—it is right, she will be yours—she will grow old and faded. Falling Star will be dim and cold—she will die and over beyond, when I see her, she will still be old and wrinkled and bent and will always work—work for you. If she does not marry, she will be disgraced. If she goes now, she will always be young, always laugh—so I think this is better—"

Gordon paused.

"What do you think the old heathen did?" said he.

"Give it up," said I.

"He drew a knife," said Gordon, "and stabbed her dead—he had reasoned it out, you see. He wanted Falling Star in the happy hunting grounds, to laugh with her dimples for him, when he should go beyond; but he was crazy, though."

"Thunder!" said I. "Why didn't you arrest him then? The old villain ought to hang as high as Haman."

"I gave my attention to Falling Star," said Gordon, simply, "Then I started after him—I have followed him two years—the government ordered me to."

"But you said he said he'd meet you here."



"Ever hear of picture writing?" said Gordon.

I nodded.

He unrolled a shred of birch bark. On it were crosses, a star, and a rudely pictured cliff.

"That was his message—and more, he says he will wait for a message from Falling Star," said Gordon. "Bah—it's nearly sun-up. I think I'll go up and get him—Look—what's that?"

A roaring sound filled the woods, a light as of the sun streamed through the heavens, a great meteor shot from the zenith down, down to the cliff—it seemed to pause a

moment above it; in the ruddy glow we could see Gray Wolf standing, with his arms stretched above him, as if in welcome; a moment more and there was a crash and roar like an avalanche.

We scrambled to our feet and rushed to the cliff. On the top, was a mass of still dully glowing meteoric iron; somewhere below it must have been what there was on earth of Gray Wolf.

"Falling Star has her revenge," said I.

"She sent a message to bring him home," said Gordon.

He drew a deep breath.

"Umph!" muttered the Indians.

## Easily Satisfied

BY WALLACE RICE

Author of "The Hancock Strike," etc.

**HARRY ST. AUBYN**—that is the way he writes his precious name—sat on the long, deep porch of the Assawbet Country Club, apparently gazing into the lovely west. I watched him from a little distance, a little surprised and uneasy at his presence. We were somewhat particular in the club, and St. Aubyn had just been admitted. I knew why, but I wondered just the same.

The sun was setting over the beautiful wooded plain that held our golf links. The orb, at its largest near the horizon, bore plainly upon its face the heavy profile of a turreted castle, set high on a vapory eminence. As I watched, the heavy clouds, slowly shepherded to the south, turned the castle into a cottage, the eminence into tall Lombardy poplars guarding it.

I had met the new member, so I called across:

"Look at the sun, St. Aubyn!"

"What of it?" he asked, after a cursory glance

"Nothing," said I, and turned to the sun again, sorry I had lost a moment of it.

The man's wife, a sweet-faced, shrinking creature of the "poor thing" genus, ventured into the game.

"Why, Harry?" she said in remonstrance, "don't you see a pretty little house on the sun, and the trees?"

"Naw," replied that worthy, not taking

his eyes off the group of men who were holding out just in front of us.

To tell what I now know to be the truth, St. Aubyn must have been pondering the dilemma he was in, though it was a day or two before I guessed what it was. He had been a page in this very club, not so many years before. Born in the neighborhood, of respectable German parentage, immigrants—Heinrich Stauben was his name then—he had mounted high in the world of finance after he had once set foot on the ladder in the old club, had transformed and aristocratized his family name, and was now thinking over the possibilities of recognition from a former associate as page.

Just who it was St. Aubyn knew well enough. Billy Fergusson, too, had been a page in the Assawbet long before, had come to be our professional golfer, and we rejoiced with him in the possession of the championship of the United States, an honor fairly won and modestly worn. His sturdy old Scotch father had laid out a links and taught him the principles and practice of the royal game an age before the club finally decided to take it up. Small the marvel, remarked the envious, that Billy knew so much about it, with the running start his old dad had given him. For the rest, he had a good six feet of stature, all an athlete's graceful strength,

and remarkable good looks. There you have the picture of a real man. There was not a blemish on him anywhere, except a curious red blotch at the inner corner of one of his eyes. "A kid tried to gouge me once," was his simple explanation of that.

Would Fergusson recognize him after all these years? was St. Aubyn's thought, and he must have made up his mind then to a complete disclaimer of his own identity under question. You see, the kind of education he had received in the school of high finance had left him a good bluffer, no matter what his cards were. But what he said was:

"Come and have a highball, John."

"No," said I, "I don't want one." I did just the same, but there was nothing between us that entitled him to call me by my first name. I didn't want one with him, anyway.

The golfers finished their game, and came up into the veranda.

"Have a drink?" asked St. Aubyn of them collectively.

"We've already ordered," replied Frank Lee, at the head of the procession, as he calmly pressed a button to call the page. The boy came, and learned what the men wanted. It seemed as if that sort of treatment might have hewn its way even through St. Aubyn's tough hide. As if for fear it mightn't, Lee called to me:

"What'll you have, Jack?"

"A long one, with plain water," said I, to rub it in, and rose to join them.

The new member rose, too—I was wrong, probably, in thinking that little things like that made any difference to him. The dutiful little wife followed, with a flush on her cheek that left us a little ashamed of ourselves; we were all sorry for her. Her husband pushed past her and

through the door, which would have slammed in her face if I had not caught it. She thanked me, and followed him in.

"Dirty brute," observed Lee as I sat down beside him.

"Who let him in?" inquired another.

"What blacksmith fitted his name to him?" asked a third.

We had quite a pleasant time for a few minutes discussing the new member. Even in a club of good fellows such unanimity of opinion as we disclosed is rare. But we all knew why he had been let in: it was not particularly creditable to the club; but it was so.



DRAWN BY W. H. D. KOERNER

St. Aubyn

St. Aubyn had struck it rich. He made his first big money, the pile that attracted attention to him, by letting a lot of his personal friends in on the ground floor. Presently they were in the basement, and St. Aubyn had taken the elevator. If he had stopped his game right there Assawbet would never have been troubled by him. But in some

way he got hold of a gold mine—one! bull-head luck led him into a den of gold mines. For five years he had not done a thing but market their stock, and every one of them was paying—big! The men he had left in the basement—some of them had reached the sub-cellar by the time he got around to look them up—had all been found and handed blocks of stock in one or the other of the big Grizzlies properties. If they had no cash to put in, or otherwise manifested a certain reluctance, he let the dividends pay for his asking price, and gave them the stock just the same. Consequently, all his early victims had taken the elevator, too, and now had offices in the Comfortable Building. These were the fellows who had helped St. Aubyn

to live down his bosky past and, as several of them were good Assawbet men, they had boosted him at last into the haven where he would be. Of course that was what he had been so decent for—we all agreed on that—but he had been decent for once in his life, at any rate.

Our conversation stopped when he came back, with old Vanderwater, our president, in tow, and seated himself just above us. We couldn't help hearing what was said: St. Aubyn was doing the talking, and he has the sort of voice that makes a siren and a megaphone want to converse with their fingers. Besides, it was what they called a revealing monologue—self-interpretative, and that sort of thing.

"Here I went and bought me the best machine that's made in America," he was complaining to Vanderwater, "and it doesn't run one-two-three with Dorgan's French wagon. And when I sent over to Paris and got a six-cylinder that could scorch the top off the macadam, Dorgan gave up his driving altogether."

"Why didn't you get a motor-boat, too?" asked Vanderwater, not very sympathetically.

"Motor-boat! Confound him (he used a simpler word of one syllable), he knew it made me sick to go on the water. And now he's set up the prettiest yacht in the harbor. Blinkety-blank-blank."

"Why don't you go in for pictures?" suggested Van. "Dorgan has some gems he picked up the last time he went across."

"Pictures!—rot!" rejoined the mine-owner. "You'll be asking me to take to nature-study next. Those things make me tired. Confound Dorgan and his art!"

Dorgan, it is hardly necessary to say, is the top-notch in judiciously extravagant expenditure in these parts. Of course it would be like St. Aubyn to pick him out to beat, when he had been in the gold dispensing business ever since he was born. Your *nouveau riche* can blow money all right, but it takes a man reared to it to get the proper echo from every twenty-dollar piece he clinks down. Blood, when you come to think about it, is just getting used to the things that the men without blood would like to have. I've got blood enough.

Perhaps I may be pardoned for pausing here to remark that St Aubyn dressed the

part and had the proper make-up for it—for everything, that is, except the squaring of himself with the men he had thrown down. He had a gross, animal body, pounds over its weight through self-indulgence. His face looked as if it should have cursed and died the day it lost its mustache. For a bull neck, a beetle brow, a ferret eye, a swine's snout, and all the other natural history specimens that he had gathered together for his physiognomy were seraphic in contrast with the greedy, drooling, brutish mess of tusks and blubber which that lost mustache bared shamelessly to the day. If you judge from this description that I have no personal fondness for St. Aubyn, you have guessed it right the first time trying. And I have some Big Grizzlies stock, too—bought in open market.

The next day the man did not trouble us. He stayed in his room and took medicine. Mrs. St. Aubyn answered polite inquiries regarding his health—never grudging so far as she was concerned—by saying it was nothing more than one of his usual attacks of the gout, and that he was resting quite easily. Her timid manner and a certain redness about her eyes went to show that he was transferring as much of his agony as wasn't payable to bearer over to his wife's long suffering shoulders. And as for gout—tommyrot! it was nothing but rheumatism aggravated by red liquor. I happened to know that when old Doctor Williams told St. Aubyn to stop drinking, and his patient had opined that whisky would cure him, the wise old chap had promptly informed him that those of his former patients who had stuck to old Scotch as a remedy had died before they could prove its value. Whereupon St. Aubyn had searched until he found a man who needed money worse than Williams did, who let him have his liquor—and got another set of fees for straightening him out after the stuff tangled him up. You can almost always get what you want if you're willing to pay for it—even the rheumatism.

The mine-owner was quieter than usual when he crept down-stairs the next day, and here was a time when he seemed almost human. But Bessie, our head-waitress, drifted across his line of vision, and off he went, like a hound after anise seed.

Being about as secretive in his methods as a bull pup, we had a chance to see him perform—and with a certain unholy joy, for Bessie's name had been Fergusson ever since her marriage, and she had become the mother of three as promising golf champions as any of us knew, if only they took after their stalwart and happy father. She had been waitress and head waitress before Billy took to her pretty face and nice manners, the whole of old Assawbet had interested itself in their courtship, and the wedding had been a real social event, with as fine a wedding and as big a bunch of presents from us all as any belle of the season longed for. It was the club itself that gave them the pretty cottage and plot of ground they lived in.

Nobody had to worry about Bessie's taking care of the preliminaries and Billy's doing the rest—if there were going to be any rest. We had seen an occasional chumpy newcomer make his little advances—she was a stunning big crimson-topped girl—and get stymied; and in a persistent case of that kind a husband who can make Colonel Bogey look like a Mexican war veteran is a good thing to have in the family. Some fellow would have put St. Aubyn on if he had been a half-decent sort of chap; but he wasn't, so we let him get on the toboggan. Just why none of the women told his wife one or two of the essential facts in the case I don't know and can't say; women have their little ways with women, and this must have been one of them. Besides, after a day or so, Mrs. St. Aubyn went off to a sanatorium under doctor's orders—to the one asylum this weary world provides for a nervous, shattered, childless woman with a yellow dog of a husband.

But before she went the poor lady had seen her Harry's voracious eye rolling around Bessie Fergusson's contours, and sad experience had taught her what to expect. Not that she foresaw the outcome of this particular bit of voracity—she didn't know the girl, nor who she was, and those of us who did did not get to be prophets in the case—but she had long been a wife who could have answered Frank Lee's classic conundrum, "Do married men make the best husbands?" with a shake of the head. She ought to have divorced

the critter long before. I suppose she stuck to him *pour encourager les autres*—as Voltaire said when the British shot Admiral Byng, and for reasons not wholly dissimilar.

After I had seen St. Aubyn try to put his arm around Bessie's waist without touching her, at late breakfast one morning, and had heard her mention the House Committee when he undertook to slip her a yellow-backed bill the next morning, I was just a little curious to see how Billy would perform when they met. But Bessie was a wise young person, and evidently kept still about a matter of no particular consequence. Certainly our golf champion showed less reluctance in meeting up with St. Aubyn than St. Aubyn did in meeting Billy, but they came face to face on the putting-green one day, and the next the mine-owner was paying to be coached in his game—and no one ever needed it more; he played like a mud turtle with St. Vitus dance. I didn't understand the man's attitude toward Billy then, but I know now. He improved steadily—it was the only way he could have changed his game, and as Fergusson was the best of coaches—but he always had something hateful to say behind the champion's back.

"How in hades did that fellah ever get where he is?" St. Aubyn asked me after play one afternoon.

"Driving farther and putting straighter than the other fellow," said I, and thought it a reasonable explanation.

"But he's a fink, a shine—a duffer," said the mine-owner, getting to his golf vocabulary a little late.

"Why don't you tell him so," I suggested pleasantly.

"I will if he don't do better by me," was the response; and the man thought he meant it, at that. No one yet has accused him of not being a good bluffer.

As I look back now, it seems to me that the reason St. Aubyn hated Fergusson so was because the rich man had no ascertainable way of impressing the poor one with the difference in their station, especially on the links. The mine-owner couldn't afford, of course, to be recognized as a former page of the club—all men may be created equal in this America of ours, but



DRAWN BY O. H. S. KOERNER

St. Aubyn had tried to put his arm around Bessie's waist

they don't stay equal when they get to handing you your hat, and bringing you your drinks, and splitting up the pot you make for them at the end of the season. That isn't just what a club like the Assaw-bet is for; we aren't exactly a labor-union.

And it must be more or less wearing to reach the champagne-perfecto-automobile superstratum while the boy that got ahead of you as a boy, stays in the beer, pipe, and buggy class, and not have the other boy know it. All you do your hard work for, and spend your good time and money for, is to make yourself think you're better than the other fellow; and it is tremendously discouraging not even to have the other fellow dream you're better on that account. In a case like this, where the other fellow is the champion of the country at this particular game, and is figured out to be as good as anybody in the world at it, and the first chap is really nothing

more than a grimy eight-spot in the financial world, it must have been fairly rasping. At any rate, we all realized that St. Aubyn really hated Fergusson for some reason or other, and the matter finally took shape in a formal charge against him in writing.

You see, the relationship between Billy and Bess never came to St. Aubyn's ears at all, or he couldn't have made such a bally ass of himself. After the man's wife went into retreat his attentions to the girl had been just as marked, and were met with the same absence of temper, and skillful side-stepping, and silence.

It so happened that the two were blissfully in love with one another, Billy and Bess, and they didn't care who found it out. They were nothing more than a couple of healthy, happy children anyway, and we often used to come upon them spooning in the neighborhood. They weren't doing anything to be ashamed of, and certainly



they weren't in the least ashamed of anything we ever caught them doing; so we always laughed, and said "Keep it up!" and wished good luck, and minded our business—they were minding theirs. Besides, they were the good friends of the whole Assawbet Club, and our own particular wards in chancery. Why shouldn't they do as they'd rather?

St. Aubyn didn't understand this, of course; and pique and jealousy got the upper hand of him when he saw Billy meet Bess, after she had finished her work one evening, and kiss her and put his arm around her as they started for their pretty little cottage and flower garden off south of the concourse. If the man hadn't been quite so piqued and quite so jealous, he would probably have made an inquiry or said something to somebody that might have headed him off; but he was accustomed to having his own way, just as he was about the whisky, and he went into the mud with both feet.

Old Vanderwater called Frank Lee and me into a corner the next morning before the old Grizzlies came down, and laughed uproariously to himself before he thought to give Frank the note he had in his hand.

"Read it," he said, between gusts, and Frank did, bringing his hand down on his knee, slapping me across the back, and joining his robust barytone in the duet. I read it, too, and made up the trio in a minute, with what a girl was once good enough to call my "manly bass"—though she admitted she had no ear for music in less than half an hour.

This is what we read:

ASSAWBET CLUB

August 12, 1907.

MY DEAR SIR:

I wish to state that I saw the head-waitress of the above named club and the professional golfer of the same hug and kiss one another in the shrubbery last evening, and I ask that proper action be taken to prevent similar offense in the future.

Yours respectfully,

HARRY ST. AUBYN.

"But that belongs to me; I'm chairman of the house committee," objected Lee, as soon as he saw Vanderwater put the note in his pocket after I foolishly handed it to him.

"You'll get it all right in a day or two," was his only satisfaction.

"I'm a member of the committee," I urged in turn, seeing a good chance go by; but it didn't affect the old man any, and he went off, chuckling.

He went in on the 9:32 and took his old letter with him—mighty selfish of him to carry off the proof of a good joke like that to show his friends in the city, when Frank and I wanted to keep it to show our friends in the Assawbet. We contrived to let everybody in that we knew, as it was, but there were a lot of fool skeptics who wanted documentary evidence—the kind of men who want to know, you know, and would not believe in the last trump unless they could see the sterling mark on the trumpet.

If St. Aubyn had been a little less wrapped up in his fleshly carcass, he must have seen that something was afoot. But thick-skinned men have their penalties to pay, as well as thin-skinned ones; and if it ever occurred to him that he was being laughed at, he regarded it as a matter of no earthly consequence—considered the source from which it came, and all the sort of thing our mothers used to tell us to keep from having us licked by a mucker. He went on about his usual pastimes through the day, drank more than was good for anybody, as usual, played golf with Fergusson—played worse than ordinary, which was quite uncalled for—and some of us thought we saw a certain red-sunset look in Billy's eyes when he scrutinized the antics of his unpromising pupil that had the promise of bad weather in it. I think now that we didn't entirely imagine it, and that the champion was puzzling himself over an elusive boyhood memory of the man he had not seen for so many years. We watched Bess, too, at luncheon and dinner, but she was simply her buxom, sunny tempered self, without even a contemptuous glance for the owner of the Big Grizzlies.

Vanderwater must have laughed himself half-silly over St. Aubyn's note at his clubs in town; in any event, he didn't come back that night until after we had dined. Lee and I might have been considered bigger liars than usual if the author of that glorious epistle hadn't undertaken some

detective-work of his own under the influence of the champagne-cup he consumed for his dinner. He hung around the porch, sucking at a fat, black cigar and glowering at the stars—the one on the end of his smoke was the only one that counted with him, and he had to look cross-eyed to see that. We were near enough to the dining-

"I don't know—yet," he replied. "Let's find out."

So we gave an imitation of mere casual strolling off after St. Aubyn.

Well, what happened, happened in successive instants. I never knew old Time to sport so many wings. Nobody hung out any Japanese lanterns, or set up a refresh-



DRAWN BY W. H. D. KOERNER

"Read it," he said between gusts

room for the half-sodden brute to keep tab on what was going on in there in a general way, and Frank Lee nudged me when at last St. Aubyn arose and strolled, in a make-believe, casual way, toward the path that led by the concourse to the Fergusson cottage.

"Come on," said Lee, as he pushed his elbow at me.

"What for?" I asked, stupidly enough. I had just lighted a fresh cigaret, and it was tasting its best.

ment-tent; but it was about as pretty a lawn party with shrubbery on the side as I ever attended. I'm still glad I went. So is Lee.

St. Aubyn, swelled up with personal importance, pique, champagne, jealousy, and his own horrid thoughts, evidently met Bessie, just as she got into the lilac bushes. He must have asked for something he thought simple—a kiss, or something like that. We never found out just what started it. Bess volunteered no information, and

it is not exactly the sort of thing you speak to a decent woman about.

But we heard an adult female screech that sounded like a calliope in a convulsion. When we scurried around the nearest bush we saw Bessie trying to find enough hair on St. Aubyn's shiny scalp to make a handful, and he had both arms around her.

"Break away!" we both shouted as we galloped toward them; but we were too slow. Billy arrived first, fresh and cool in clean flannels after his day's work, and he came with a pair of arms that could juggle anvils. He got some sort of half-Nelson on the other, only his fat-face was turned the other way, and up went the fellow in a parabola, filling the air with the rest of the conic sections as he rose, and came down into one of the lilacs a-sprawl and a-spraddle, avalanching down into the path like a mud slide. Billy grabbed him by the shoulders as his terminal facilities ended on the ground, and straightened him up as if he were going to fit him to a swift, ready-while-you-wait punch.

"Don't hit him!" we both yelled at once. Bess didn't say anything, but she looked more disappointed in Billy when he put his arm down than I have ever seen her before or since.

Billy did not hit him; but he gave him a little extra shake for luck as he took his hands off him, and stood there with one rigid across his hip and the other drawn back, for all the world like a tensely strung bow and its arrow.

"What do you mean by trying to kiss her?" he sputtered, "you infernal polecat!"

I had to admire St. Aubyn's courage—or had he bluffed successfully so long that he didn't know when his hand was called?

"Why shouldn't I kiss the—"

Biff! and they clenched. Billy overswung himself or something, and when they went down St. Aubyn was on top for a minute. I heard Fergusson let out a little involuntary squeal, as if a knife were getting into him, and Frank and I started to pull Billy off as they rolled over. Bess, her confidence in her husband fully regained, jumped in between and spat at us like a kitten.

"Leave them alone!" she hissed. So we did.

"I know you now, you blackguard!"

shouted Fergusson, as he stood over him, with blood streaming down from his eye, just where the red blemish showed so plain on his ruddy brown skin. With a strength that is wonderful to me yet, he picked the heavy man clear off his feet, swung him in the air, and brought him down facing us, with one arm close up under St. Aubyn's chin in an improvised kind of strangle-hold.

"Tell these men who you are, you worm!" he shouted, his bloody face over the wretch's shoulder.

No reply was forthcoming, and we could see that right arm tighten and grip around the short, fat throat. The red face began to purple and darken, until a gurgle that Billy took to signify willingness gasped out of the pulpy body. Fergusson relaxed his arm, and all that came from the hollow of his elbow for his pains was a choky:

"Go to—!"

The tightening process began again. It was most unpleasant to look at. But when Lee and I started forward to stop it, Bessie, her fingers crooked and taut like talons, edged between. I thought about valkyrs and things afterward; just then the scene before me was doing all my thinking for me.

St. Aubyn went limp in a minute, and his weight hung on Billy's arm. The elbow straightened and the man sank down, his back against the golfer's shins.

"Now tell these gentlemen what your real name is!" he commanded; and even His Big Grizzlies realized then that it had come to a show-down.

"Henry Stauben," he muttered in reply.

"Say it louder, and say it right!" insisted Billy, his bloodstained face leaning over the poor cad.

"Heinie Stauben," he said at last; and Fergusson jerked him to his feet again.

"Mr. Lee, sir," said the champion, as he released him, "this Heinie Stauben was page in this club with me, sir, when we were lads. You see my eye now, and this is the man that tried to gouge it out once before. He was discharged then, and I miss my guess if you don't discharge him again."

We looked at the eye, saw that the eyeball was untouched, and shook hands with



DRAWN BY W. H. D. KOERNER

St. Aubyn played worse than ordinary

Billy and Bess, as arm in arm, like the couple in "Marpessa,"

"slowly they,  
He looking downward and she gazing up,  
Into the evening-green wandered away."

We turned to the tottery mine-owner,

each taking an arm to hold him up, and  
started for the club.

"You blithering idiot," said Lee, "didn't  
you know they were married?"

"Married!" gulped St. Aubyn.

He had never learned so much in so

short a time. It amounted to a revelation.

The three of us found Vanderwater just beyond the shubbery, holding back an excited crowd of members. He made a sign to us, and we took St. Aubyn down through the basement dressing-rooms and up to his chamber. Vanderwater joined us in a minute or two. He had come out from town just in time to follow Frank and me, and to head off those who followed him.

"May I ask an explanation?" he inquired politely, after we had laid the much shaken mine-owner on his bed.

He couldn't talk, so we did the explaining.

"Stauben—ahem, Mr. St. Aubyn," remarked the president, judicially, "you don't see anything to do except resign, do you?"

"No," agreed St. Aubyn, briefly.

We found paper and an envelope, propped him up in bed to write, and the resignation was formally made out and accepted on the spot. While it was writing, Vanderwater, who was something of a preacher in a mild way, delivered a homily.

"Mr. St. Aubyn," he observed in his most formal manner, "William Ferguson is the golf champion of the United States, and Elizabeth, his wife, is the best head waitress in any club anywhere. They have a nice little cottage, a pretty garden, a good name, three beautiful children, glow-

ing health, excellent manners, fine looks, the affection and esteem of every one who knows them, and independent means. I don't know a happier or more satisfied couple anywhere—"

"They're blamed easily satisfied," interrupted St. Aubyn, getting his wind.

"Sir!" burst out Vanderwater, and with that we left him, and old Assawbet knew his face no more.

But we do know him by letter, some of us. Vanderwater received this about as soon as St. Aubyn could get back to his mines:

HARRY ST. AUBYN  
COMFORTABLE BUILDING  
August 18, 1907.

MY DEAR SIR:

I enclose my check for \$1,500, payable to your order. Will you please put \$500 of it into the club-servants' pool, and use the balance to buy coin for the next holder of the golf championship, if a professional; or for a gold cup, if an amateur.

I should like my name withheld from the public in this connection.

Yours very truly,  
HARRY ST. AUBYN.

Well, there was something in the old duffer, after all; and he seems to realize that what he got was coming to him. But it doesn't make him any prettier to look at—I saw him in the street yesterday.

## The Beriot Shop

BY EDNA KENTON

HE sat drawn together in a corner of the Cottage Grove avenue car, with an expression of acute agony on his face, caused by the grinding moans which the decrepit cable emitted. The antiquated car lurched not merely fore and aft, but from side to side, and the young man felt his sensitive Parisianized stomach turn many times in transit. They were only so far on their way as Thirteenth street, and he was booked for Fifty-sixth and the lake, and the cross-town blocks run nine to the mile.

At Fifteenth street he opened his pain-filled eyes, and stared superciliously across the aisle. A woman in a red plaid shawl was sitting there, with a large basket of

unwashed clothes at her feet, and, at her side, a round-eyed boy. The boy's eyes were steadfastly fixed on the young man's eyeglasses, which rode lightly astride his delicately modeled nose, secured from disaster, not by the conventional, American black string, but by an inch-wide, heavy black gros-grain ribbon. His hair, of curling and collar length, and his priestly hat, with its low, pot-bellied crown, completed the *tout ensemble*.

The boy's personal questionings and the tub Madonna's answers anent the young man opposite struck his delicate ears without disturbing his pose or poise. It had taken him but six months to conclude that





DRAWN BY W. W. COLBY

He read it over aloud

everything about Chicago was hopelessly philistine, and confirmation of that conclusion was a satisfaction rather than an irritant.

Had there been any natural tie to draw him back from Paris to his native town, Ovid Moreau would have avoided Chicago as he would have shunned the place of all the lepers. Had his father been living, still conducting that tiny mail-order business which had involved him at unpleasantly close intervals with the Chicago postal authorities, the son would have remained in Paris, where he had lived for six years, or would have settled in New York, or in Butte, Montana—anywhere but in this western metropolis. But the elder Moreau having passed to his exceeding small reward, if finite judgment count for aught, the young man, twenty years of age, felt the pangs of something very like nostalgia clawing at him, and came swiftly back,

unexpected by any friends—relatives he had none. This was six months ago.

He had promptly looked up the old art school, and his former teachers there, and one or two former fellows. These he discovered to be hopelessly *bourgeois*, having remained Chicagoans during the period in which he was becoming swiftly French. Then, because no one else had done the thing, he settled himself in a long, narrow shop-room, in a little group of one-story buildings facing Jackson Park, a room whose shop-windows must be burlaped or painted or otherwise treated in order that one might hide one's self from the gaze of the vulgar, who, it must be sorrowfully owned, did not throng to gaze on young Mr. Moreau and his small stock of penates and his tubs of clay.

But one of the washlady's phrases had gone home. She had suggested to her inquiring son that the young gentleman

opposite might be an actor, or a preacher, or an "ad" for some hair-wash. Truly and forsooth, he had had enough of this American mania for advertising. He had gone down, this very afternoon, to his old school to refresh his soul, sick with longing for Paris and its suburbs, with long draughts of Jules Guerin's beautiful work, and he had been dragged from that satisfying hour, by an enthusiastic old bore, to the lecture-hall, to listen to that same old bore's maundering talk on "Modern Advertising a Bane to Beauty."

Did he not know it—he, Ovid Moreau, whose eyes had feasted on the Mucha posters and the fellows thereof; had not his eyes been smitten all but to blindness with the staring bill-boards shouting out in Irish greens and Turkey reds and Prussian blues the mighty deeds and valorous of "Do-It All-Cleanozene;" and "Corn-Corned Whisky-Tells It All!" He loathed this country of advertisements; they were the first things he had seen as his boat crept slowly along the edge of lower Manhattan; they were necessarily the last things he had seen as his train left the Jersey shore. All along his route he had not escaped the sight of Nature's desecration by man, as the speaker of the bore-some afternoon had worded it, and by the time that he was yet so far from Chicago as one hundred miles, the ham and soap and "Itty-Bitty Sausage" signs had filled him with consuming wrath.

He, an advertising man of anything! He laughed grimly to himself, and surveyed with contempt sublime the glaring signs which made hideous the car in which he swayed and swung. Truly, these pigs of Americans! Here was a skin-food, temptingly advertised by a sore and bleeding arm thrust, red and angry, across a piece of cardboard! Yonder was a jeweler's advertisement—rings, photographed in an inartistic bunch upon a hand frankly plebeian. Over there was an eye-wash, staringly placarded below a row of staring eyes in all stages of red and pink disease. Directly across from him was a placard inviting public attention to a new confectioner's shop and tea-room for women, sweetly wrought out in lavender and pinkish silver, announcing to the Cottage Grove public that Beriot served superfine

ices, delicate drinks, and "lunches" at his shop. The young and highly strung artist shuddered in every nerve of his being. Only one misused word did he loathe more than "lunch" employed as a substantive and that was the American woman's fondness for employing the physiological term "waist," when she means the bodice of her gown.

Nothing, not even the bleeding arm thrust across the white pasteboard, nor the row of ailing eyes staring down at him, so unstrung him as the porcine ignorance which this pig Beriot's phraseology denoted, and he was in a bad frame of mind when he unlocked the door upon his cold room, about which was not even the beauty of age, nothing save the dinginess of cheap newness.

He muttered various things in *patois* French as he poked among the cinders, and finding a few coals, put them upon a few lumps of his precious coke. Then he flung himself down on the floor, continuing to mutter at intervals; now and then he laughed. Finally he sprang up, his long hair straggling over the faded flannel of his blouse, and sat down at a table, where he wrote a letter. Having finished it, he read it over aloud, with extravagant gestures, and a satisfaction which warmed him more than his meager fire:

MONSIEUR BERIOT:

I tender to you my felicitations on the colors you have contrived for your advertisement now hanging in the various street-cars of your city. But on nothing else. The design is atrocious; the lettering is ridiculous; and the phraseology invites laughter. Why do you not seek competent advisers and judges before you expose yourself to the sneers of an intelligent public by giving them half-baked placards? And do not ever use "lunch" again, when you mean "luncheon." Lunch means "coffee-and" at a counter. Luncheon is what you intend to offer your chiffoned lady patrons. Believe me, *mon-sieur*—

He hesitated over the signature, and finally, with a triumphant grin, signed his own name, and added his number. Then he strolled, bareheaded, down the street to post it, and returned at peace with himself and the world. Such a feather in the grasp of whim is the artistic temperament.

Late in the afternoon of the fourth day



DRAWN BY W. M. COLEBY

"They are bad but they are pretty."

after, Ovid Moreau swaggered off his car and walked superciliously down a side, down-town street which led him close to Michigan avenue. At the door of a lavender-decked confectioner's shop he turned in, pot-bellied hat, inch-wide eye-glass ribbon and all, and stood in the ice-cream scented shop, languid and entirely self-possessed.

On either side of him were stretched counters loaded with bonbons, but barren of buyers. Beyond them, in the rear of the room, was a wilderness of white spread, empty tables. The walls were done in much gilt and various blues and pinks, and the floors were mosaiced wonderfully. As he gazed, contemptuous of all the glare, a voice addressed him.

"Iss it anyt'ing you vish?"

Young Mr. Moreau looked the plump, worried little man well over.

"I wish Monsieur Beriot. Fetch him!"

"I am Monsieur Beriot," the round little man replied; with a very bad German accent tagged to his two French words.

Ovid Moreau smiled world-wearily.

"*Je suis Monsieur Moreau*," he remarked maliciously.

Monsieur Beriot blushed, then stammered hopelessly, like a criminal caught in the act.

"You haf got mein letter," he said chokingly. "You haf coom to mein shop. I tell you to coom, to speak *mit* me about—t'ings. You haf coom—Minna! Minna!"

"*Ja, vater*," and a very pretty girl came from the serving-pantry. She paused to smooth down her apron as she saw the young man, who merely glanced at her, and turned away, only to glance again. The girl was the daughter, then, of this round little German, but she looked French. Her black eyes and hair and her red cheeks, her trim, un-German figure, her very high heels and her very high air all combined to make of her a puzzle, especially when in response to her father's stammering introduction, she replied in almost perfect French.

"Minna, pull the curtains down quick," ordered Monsieur Beriot. "It iss all but six o'clock, *und* *bissness* hass been fery bad to-day. No one will coom in yet—we will shut oop; and, so, we will haf time to talk, *monsieur*. You haf write me a letter which hurt me mooch, but it iss I moost succeed, for *meine* Minna. You haf seen I am not *Monsieur* Beriot; that I am only Herr Kumpferstein. It was Minna's *mutter*, *meine frau*, who wass a Beriot; it iss she *meine* Minna looks like. But Kumpferstein's candy shop—who of Chicago ladies would coom to buy! It needs the French. So I became *Monsieur* Beriot. But it haf not gone well; you saw how many we haf in to-day when you coom in—no one. No one cooms to buy. Yet *mein* candies are goot, and *mein* shop iss fine—*hein?*"

The young artist stared contemplatively at Minna, who eyed him distrustfully.

"She is the card you should play up to, in your French shop," he remarked impersonally.

"So," assented Herr Kumpferstein. "But until we make it goot, Minna moost make the clam broth and salads and other goot things American ladies love



DRAWN BY W. W. COLBY

Her adoring faith

to eat and drink. Only they do not coom, not even on matinée days, und *zwei* theaters near us. Sometimes I wonder haf I made one great meestake—Kumpferstein's *delicatessen*; that sounds goot, *nicht wahr!* But *meine* Minna does not like sausages and cheeses—"Vater, buy the candy shop!" she say to me. And I, I lofe candies, too, not sausage. Then I advertise *mein* shop; *ach*, but it costs, this advertising. And I ride on cars last Sunday, to read *mein* sign, and to say to men I talk to: 'See' I say, 'do you know Beriot?' 'No,' they all say, 'but his sign it iss goot.' Then two days ago I get your letter—to read *mein* sign iss *schlecht*. Minna she cry. I ask you to call and together we shall talk it over. Minna, bring coffee und sandwiches und salads und all there iss. We will eat, Monsieur Moreau, and talk. *Mein* sign, what else iss wrong mit it, and what am I to do?"

All his life long Ovid Moreau had lacked sympathy and trust and approval, and had always hungered for it. His father had always doubted him, his art teachers had never unreservedly praised. He was no genius, was poor Ovid, but he had a really sincere love for what was, for him, the unattainable, and he had plodded faithfully along the narrow road, his brain filled with visions which his hands could never carry out. Painting and sculpture he had essayed, and, because he had a pretty taste in modeling, he had specialized in that plastic art. But he had lived a lonely, restless, querulous life. When people did not know enough to question the value of his art, they laughed pitilessly at his vagaries in dress, and while he really did not feel such laughter deeply, and, in fact, rather invited it, he appreciated to the full the kindly dependency of this round, worried little German, and the light-handed attentions of Minna. Herr Kumpferstein had accepted him, long hair, gros-grain ribbon, and all without question. The young man felt his brain suddenly quiver and glow.

"Of course the wording of the poster is very bad," he said languidly, watching Minna as she dropped the lumps of sugar into his coffee. "And the design—there is no sense of proportion in the lines. It is all confused, unbeautiful. The coloring is not bad, is rather good, in fact. But as a



DRAWN BY W. W. COLBY

It was the effort of his life

whole, it irritated me, because I had to face it for so long. So I wrote you about it."

"Ach, yes!" sighed Herr Kumpferstein. "If it was not right, I should know. You did right, young man, fery right, to speak so kind. But if it iss not right, then I do not know at all what iss right." He sighed again. "I haf put much money into this shop here," he said sadly. "I moost get some of it out again if I can, *monsieur*. I would that you would aid me in what you will. You are a fery great *artiste*, I see fery plain, and I cannot pay you what you should haf, if you gif me any new sign, but what I can, I shall."

The bright lights shone upon the little group of three. The silver soda-fountain glittered heartlessly; the plate glass of the show-cases reflected the ceiling-lights and the sheen of taffies and vari-colored buttercups. Opera-sticks reared their countless selves in untouched sheaves of sweetness and trays of candied violets and rose-leaves preserved their evenly piled array. The



spotless order of the place but intensified its loneliness.

Minna dropped suddenly into a chair, and laid her head upon her arms.

"*Mein vater, mein vater*," she sobbed, "you are so brave, but it is the truth that in these weeks we haf served fifteen ladies with clam broth and sandwiches, and sold ten pounds of candies and six ice-cream sodas. We haf worked to make things fine, and no one will come to see. I have made all salads on our *menu* day after day, and day after day I throw away and make again. And I haf worked to make the windows nice—and they are wrong, doubtless, like *mein vater's* sign."

She flung up her head and stared defiantly across the table at young Mr. Moreau, who stared back contemplatively.

"They are bad," yes," he said with gentleness, "but they are what most ladies would call pretty. That is what you tried to make them, no doubt."

"But if they are pretty, why are they bad?" demanded Minna, with bitterness.

"Because they are not good," explained Monsieur Moreau.

Minna laughed discourteously.

"That sounds foolish. They are not good; they are bad—but they are pretty. Do you know what you mean? I do not."

"Minna," said Herr Kumpferstein sternly. "Monsieur Moreau hass told me that we are wrong. It iss not for such as you to laugh at a great *artiste*."

Minna's eyes filled again. "I do not laugh at the gentleman, *mein vater*," she said brokenly. "Only I haf tried to make the window look nice for the *matinée* ladies—"

Moreau stared in discomfort as her head went down upon her arms once again. To break the tension, he arose and walked briskly about the shop, rubbing his finger over the walls, shaking his bushy hair over this thing, nodding it over that. At last he came back to Herr Kumpferstein and his daughter.

"The possibilities here are very good," he said to the dejected twain. "Your old posters have given me the idea for the *motif*, but you will have to spend more money to get rid of this blue and gold and silver—bah—they have here in this Chicago of yours—"

"*Nein! nein!*" objected Herr Kumpferstein.

"—a brown chocolate-shop, and a blue chocolate-shop, and a chocolate-shop all mirrors, and a gilt chocolate-shop, but no lavender chocolate-shop. Which gives one immediately the *motif* for the decorations, to be carried out in everything—the orchid *motif*, Herr Kumpferstein. It suits the class to which you may appeal: the ladies of great wealth are orchids, delicately nurtured, frail, and rare. It is new; it will give us what we must have, a chance to blend blues and crimsons into wonderful lavenders and purples. It will give us a new poster, *motif*, a poster-lady with orchids, *à la* Mucha, all curves and color. I see it now, my poster design, which will make all crude Chicago sit up and gasp and rush to buy at Beriot's. Only we must tear down all this gilt and blue and silver."

"Tear down!" protested Herr Kumpferstein. "But I haf joost paid many dollars for it—"

"And Minna!" continued the young artist entrancedly. "*Fräulein* Minna! In a wink she must become *Mademoiselle* Marie. She must leave the kitchen, even if you, Herr Kumpferstein, must enter it. She must wear a lavender silk gown, so short, to the ankles, and slippers with high heels, higher than those, *mademoiselle*, and silver heels at that, and a thin mull apron, with a lavender bow and streamers for her hair; and she must sit at the cashier's desk, moved so that through a special window-space the passing people may see her, the poster-lady of the new Beriot poster. The window shall be dressed on the lines of the new poster, Herr Kumpferstein, and *Mademoiselle* Marie, at her desk, shall sit like the poster-lady on the poster. Everybody as they pass shall say, 'Ah, the model of the Beriot poster! Come, let us go in!' And once in, they shall exclaim until they have no words of praise left, only the resolve to come again, and that to-morrow."

"But who will do all this!" cried Herr Kumpferstein anxiously. "I haf no monies I can let go out now, with nothing cooming in. I moost not gif oop for one month, and I moost save for rent and for clams and chickens and oysters, for which no one cares, and which we moost throw away,

but which we moost haf, lest some one ask!"

The fire of absolute genius flared bravely in the pale blue eyes of Monsieur Moreau.

"Look! Herr Kumpferstein," he cried. "I will do it—I! I have nothing else to do, in this pig of all cities. I have gone away to Paris—my Paris, and I come back to find no friends, only those who laugh at me, and say, 'He has done nothing, has no *salon* honors—nothing. He can do nothing!' Well, all these shall see. In a bitter hour I sit down and write you a letter which grieves you and discourages your daughter to tears. I shall encourage her to laughter, if you will let me work my will in this shop. You will have to pay for my paints and some brushes and a few things which I shall need. But for the rest—poof! Let it go, let it go! By and by, when the Beriot is going swiftly, you may pay me weekly, until you have paid me what it is worth from your business. But let me work my will now, in these rooms."

Monsieur Moreau's Parisian accent, already too pronounced for his former friends in Chicago, who looked upon it, together with his curling hair and his gros-grain ribbon, as gross affectation, grew more and more French as his emotion became pronounced, until he closed at last in a whirl of French and broken English which only Minna, daughter of the Beriots, could understand.

"But while all this is doing?" she demanded. "The customers, if any come, to-morrow?"

"Tie crêpe upon the door," screamed Monsieur Moreau ecstatically. "Drape it and the windows in crêpe, and shut out the world. Then, within, we shall paint out these abominations, and draw the orchid *motif* upon the walls. Wait! You shall see, if Mademoiselle Marie will sit to-night for the orchid-lady."

In a dismal daze Herr Kumpferstein walked the floor during the three hours in which *monsieur* slaved over a cardboard which he rushed out to buy from an art-shop round the corner. When at last Mademoiselle Marie and Herr Kumpferstein bent together over the new Beriot poster, they exclaimed in hushed voices over it. Truly, it was beautiful!

"And to-night, dream of that trans-

posed into a window decoration!" cried Monsieur Moreau, as he gathered up his cardboard, and prepared to take his departure. "*Mon dieu*, but we shall send this piggish town stark, staring mad, when we get Mademoiselle Marie placed at her orchid-like desk in her window, made to look like this!"

"To-morrow we shall tie the crêpe upon the doors," announced Herr Kumpferstein magnificently. "A few hundred dollars more or less—what does it matter! Too much lies buried here alretty, to grudge a few hundred more dead dollars from lying beside it. And it may succeed. If it does, young man—" Herr Kumpferstein's voice broke, "You may ask of me what you will, and it iss all yours, all yours!"

For two weeks the Beriot shop mourned like one distraught, and its closed doors, swathed in black, attracted more attention than its doors, opened, had ever done. The crêpe was heavy, dense, superabundant, noticeable. Laurel wreaths hung here and there, and were renewed as they withered. Without was mourning; within was work, the like of which was not known before to any of the few participants.

Monsieur Moreau ran here and there, up ladders and down them. Along planks, perilously placed, he lay flat on his back, while he worked steadily at some ceiling decoration which all but defied human effort to accomplish. For the first time in his life his brain teemed with ideas which were vivid enough to force their way through his fingers. It was the supreme and final effort of his artistic life. He hardly formulated this conviction, but it was nevertheless, conviction, even while he worked. He had never known adoring faith before, and would not likely meet with such inspiring trust again. Therefore, he worked as a man works on the supreme achievement of his life.

At last, the seventeenth morning—which was one Monday morning—since the Beriot shop went into mourning dawned, and habitual passers-by, having become accustomed to the sight of the crêpe-swathed doors, glanced curiously into the uncurtained window. There, sitting at a desk of curves and lavender lacquer, sat the pro-

tototype of Beriot's new poster-maid, which for the last three days had smiled at all the passengers on every car-line in town. The curves of the window-decoration, the palms which towered far above her head, everything, to the black hair of the girl whose profile showed clearly through the shining glass, was the poster reproduced in flesh and blood. Once within, one perceived the orchid *motif*, in lavenders and Tyrian reds and purple, repeated again and again. The bonbons were grouped like orchids, were tinted like orchids, and the serving girls were all of them dressed like *Mademoiselle Marie*, in dresses fashioned by *Mademoiselle Marie's* clever fingers, of lavender silk which came to their trim ankles. And joy of joys, they all spoke broken French or broken English, just as you prefer to look at it.

Monsieur Moreau had attended to all that, for in the French quarter he had found them and had dragged them forth. One of them presided behind the soda-fountain, and from a door in the extreme rear could be seen, from time to time, Herr Kumpferstein's anxious face, between his intervals of salad-making and the brewing of chocolate. And, to cap the entire climax, leaning negligently against *mademoiselle's* desk, in wide, baggy trousers, beloved of his student-days, and in black velvet jacket with his eyeglasses secured by a gros-grain ribbon, one and one half inches wide, and with his hair carefully curled and longer than ever, precisely as he was wont to wear it in his beloved *Latin Quartier*, stood Monsieur

Moreau, speaking all but French now—for the nonce, Monsieur Beriot himself and so addressed by all.

And why not! The weeks of outer mourning had been, within, weeks of increasing friendship. Monsieur Moreau basked in the warmth of spontaneous trust and confidence and admiration, as a cat basks before a winter-fire. And yet, at this high tide of his art, he knew perfectly well that it could never roll so high again. His work here was not yet finished. It would take many nights and long Sundays to complete the decorative scheme he had mapped out. But he was discovering himself, in several ways, to be developing a sense, hitherto dormant—the business sense.

It showed first in his gaining for Herr Kumpferstein an option for a long lease on this shop. "Shall my orchid decoration drift into other hands?" he asked himself indignantly.

And for the first time he knew himself to be the son of his father in a faint degree. Might he really become a business-man, after all? Ovid Moreau asked himself this question many times.

He knew now, splendid as was this piece of work, that it was his last. Its conception had exhausted his brain no less than its execution had drained vitality from his fingers. Never again could he evolve or execute so consistently beautiful a piece of work.

It was his swan-song in art. And after art, what?

It was Herr Kumpferstein who suggested the answer.



DRAWN BY W. W. COLBY

He saw himself chef

"You are a great *artiste*, *ja!*" he said. "But I haf not monies to pay you now what you deserve. Und you say you haf no monies, or friends. I haf to be cook, since Minna, *meine Marie*, iss to be here. There needs here *ein mann*—it iss too much to ask; I haf said too mooch; it iss an insult. I refuse to say more."

Yet, on the opening morning, as Monsieur Beriot, the young man took his stand.

And his rewards were great. And the furred and the chiffoned ladies—how they flowed into the Beriot shop—sipped their chocolate and dipped daintily into their salads, the while they asked plaintively:

"Who is the decorator?"

And the decorator, safely hidden within the shoes of Monsieur Beriot, thanked his gods that no orders could pour in upon him, orders which he could not fill. All his years of study had culminated here—had drained him dry. He could never do anything so great again, nothing better than the poorest of mediocre stuff, the sort of thing he knew himself to have been doing all his life. But, as Monsieur Beriot, it was a delight to listen to the ardent praises of his masterpiece; to order this Jeanne and that Anna about; to send word out to Herr Kumpferstein that the day's tendency was entirely toward the special Beriot oyster-patties. And when that first day's rush was over, and the day's coinage counted, *mademoiselle* cried again from sheer joy, and thereby stained the front of her orchid-gown, until she had to pin the mull apron higher ever after, to hide those joyful tear-drops.

Herr Kumpferstein, being a prudent German, went forward slowly; but within a year he saw himself *chef* pure and simple,

the thing which he had always longed to be in his own café. He was relieved forever of the business cares which vexed his soul, and could give his mind with real seriousness to the creation of a new tart or *entrée*. For Monsieur Beriot had developed a business-head which was keen enough to compel him to retain all his absurdities—the long hair and the gros-grain ribbon and the ingrafted French accent on an American tongue. These were his stock in trade, as well as a large part of Herr Kumpferstein's.

And, one year from the day of the real opening of the Beriot shop a little party of three, the *herr*, *mademoiselle*, and *monsieur*, wended their way from the orchid-motified nest to the huge building which housed mysterious legal offices, where Ovid Moreau, by right of special petition and permission, became Ovid Beriot, Monsieur Beriot forever—co-partner, according to papers already drawn up, with Herr Kumpferstein, in the Beriot shop.

And from there it was but a step to a certain office where Monsieur Beriot, a citizen of the United States, obtained evidence of his fitness to wed with one Minna Kumpferstein, spinster. And then, with a few moments' stop within the shadow of a justice's office, where Minna Kumpferstein became Minna Beriot, the *herr* and *monsieur* and *madame* hastened back to the Beriot shop where the prosperous noon rush was beginning, and where the *herr*, as head *chef*, and *monsieur*, as floor-manager, and *madame* as cashier-extraordinary were sadly needed.

And there they are to this day—the *herr*, and *monsieur*, and *madame*.

## With Equal Eye

BY JOHN BARTON OXFORD

Author of "Miss Lucinda's Foundling," etc.

JIMMY RIORDAN drove the last nail into the cover of the packing-case, and catching up the brush and ink-pot from the top of the radiator in the corner, put the address on the lid with a hand that was far from steady; then turned to the thick-set man

who sat on another packing-case close by.

"There has got to be an end to this sometime, Flynn, an' it might jest as well be now as ever," he said in a voice that trembled with suppressed anger. "There's nothin' doin'—nothin'."



The man on the packing-case blew a cloud of smoke from his cigar and shrugged his shoulders contemptuously. "Go easy now—go easy, Jimmy," he counseled. "You'd better take a few thinks before you go to jumpin'. I'm lettin' you down dead easy."

Riordan leaned against his packing-case, his fingers working nervously and sparks of fire showing in his eyes. "I'm sick of it," he said hoarsely, "sick of it. You aint goin' to bleed me for another red cent. I tell you, there is nothin' doin', d'y'er hear?"

Flynn's little eyes regarded the other man coldly, while a sardonic smile curved the corners of his mouth.

"It's a nice little job you've got here," he observed meditatively, "nice soft little snap—eighteen per and a chance to go up, I hear. I aint unreasonable, you ought to see that. An' I should sure want to keep my nice little job, if I was you. It's only a measly three-an'-a-half a month you cough up to keep it. Just do a little thinkin' now, before you go buttin' your head against a wall." Through half-closed eyes he watched a smoke-ring drift idly towards the ceiling of the basement. "An' you ought to think of the girl, too. If you chuck the job, where does she fit?"

"Cut out the girl gag," Jimmy cried, through his clenched teeth. "You can't work me that way. I'm livin' straight now—dead straight, an' you nor none of your kind are goin' to bleed me any more—see?"

"D'y'er ever stop to think," said Flynn with a knowing leer, "that girls count more on the job than they do on the fellow that's got it? Lose your job, sonny, an' it's '23' for yours all right, so far as the girl is concerned. Weddin'-bells don't tinkle when you're on your uppers."

Riordan straightened up and his eyes blazed dangerously. He brought down one doubled fist on the lid of the packing-case with a bang.

"I'm sick of you and I'm through with you," he roared. "You've got your last cent out of me. Go on an' do anything that you want to; go up an' tell the old man all about it; go an' tell him I've been sent up twice for dippin', if you want to. Go an' tell him, but, whether you do it or not,

you wont get anything more out of me. I'm all done with you."

He took a step toward Flynn with his fist clenched; the veins in his temples stood out like whipcords, and his breath was coming hard.

"D'y'er hear me!" he yelled. "Go on up an' tell the whole dirty business, but if you get me fired this time, I'll do you, Flynn. S'help me Heaven, I'll do you, good an' plenty!"

Flynn slid from his perch on the packing-case and faced Riordan with an open sneer.

"Have it your own way," he growled. "I've given you your chance an' you've turned it down. You've tried before to give me the go-by an' you know how it worked. I ask you once more: Are you goin' to come down or aint you?"

Riordan seemed trying to hold himself together. One big paw clutched the edge of the packing-case, while the fingers of his other hand closed and unclosed spasmodically.

"Get out of here," he enunciated thickly. "Get out before I kill you!"

Flynn gave his shoulders a most expressive shrug, turned on his heel, and walked coolly out of the basement. At the door he turned.

"I'll give you one more chance—" he began.

Riordan cut him short.

"Get out quick, for God's sake, or you'll get yours now," he said in a choking voice.

The basement-door slammed behind Flynn, and Riordan leaned weakly against the wall, breathing heavily. Then he took a truck, and, to relieve his over-wrought feelings, began trundling the heavy packing-cases to the elevator which ran up to the sidewalk. All the rest of the morning there was a strange lump in his throat and a red mist before his eyes. There was never a doubt in his mind that Flynn would see to it that he was ousted from this job. Three precedent cases told him all too plainly what Flynn's action in the matter would be.

Nor were his surmises incorrect. When he returned from his noon-time lunch he found an envelope on his little desk in the



basement. In it were his full week's wages and a brief note stating that his services as shipper were no longer required by the National Celluloid Comb Company. He stood for several minutes by the desk, reading the letter over and over and swallowing hard at something which rose persistently in his throat. Then he put on his coat and went very quietly to the street.

"I've tried to live straight," he muttered, "but these fly-cops wont let me; now I'll give 'em what's comin' to 'em."

At the first barroom, Riordan went in and ordered whisky. All that afternoon and far into the night he drank recklessly, but the only effect of the whisky seemed to be a more poignant sense of the wrongs he had suffered. A second day was passed in much the same way, and then a third. On the fourth morning Riordan, bleary-eyed, unkempt, and with every nerve a tingle from his recent debauch, made his way unsteadily into a little saloon much frequented by "dips," "strong-arms," and other lesser lights of the underworld. He leaned wearily against the bar, sipping a hot Scotch, when the door was pushed open and Flynn stood grinning beside him.

"Goin' in for dippin' again?" he sneered.

Riordan turned and looked at him unthinkingly for a moment; then he snatched his glass from the bar in front of him and hurled it full into Flynn's face; at the same moment he took a step forward, his right arm shot out, and Flynn, with a gasping sigh, sank to the floor, where he lay in a crumpled heap from which a little red stream crept farther and farther.

Riordan, his legs wide apart, stood over the prostrate man and gazed down at him stupidly. The red stream, reaching a little hollow in the worn, uneven floor, spread itself into a pool. He watched it with fascinated eyes. He was aware that one of the bartenders was beside him, saying in an awed voice: "You've done for him, all right!" Then someone came waddling up and bent ponderously over the form on the floor. Riordan noticed dully that it was Matt Casey, the owner of the place.

"Who done this?" he puffed excitedly. "Who done Flynn up?" There was anger in his voice—and fear, too.

Riordan's world seemed suddenly to adjust itself with a snap. He turned and made for the door with Matt Casey in heavy pursuit.

"Stop, you! Stop!" he yelled, but Riordan reached the door and pushed through to the street.

Behind him, as he fled, arose a babel of sounds in which Matt Casey's predominant voice was explaining raucously that Flynn had been done for. He was aware of pursuing footsteps. Turning his head, he saw a score of people, with a roundsman lumbering in the van, running after him. There was a sharp crack of a revolver; a bullet went whistling over his head, accompanied by demands to stop from his pursuers. He dodged deftly into a side-street, and ducked into the open door of a tenement-house. Up the stairs he went in breathless haste, stumbling over a row of wash-tubs at the top of the first flight, and nearly upsetting a chattering Greek woman at the end of the second.

He dashed to the roof of the building, swung himself up a ladder to an open scuttle, crawled through, closing it after him, and scurried across the roofs to a similar scuttle on a similar house. Through this he dropped, and, kicking off his shoes, began a noiseless descent of the stairs. At the foot of the first flight a door was open and beyond he could see a bare vista of deserted rooms. Into this empty apartment he crept, breathing hard and blinking in the semi-gloom of the place. In one corner was a pile of moldy bedding, and under this he crawled, curled himself up, and lay there chuckling.

He could hear dimly shouts and confusion in the street outside; but in the security of his moldy hiding-place they gave him no concern. He stretched his limbs comfortably, re-adjusted the ragged pile above him, and, thrusting one arm under his head, sank into sodden slumber.

Riordan awakened with a vague sense of discomfort. Something seemed to be stifling him. His eyes smarted; there was an acrid choking in his throat. He stirred uneasily, threw off the moldy clothes that covered him, and sat up. As he did so, an ominous crackling reached his ears and the flicker of flames lighted uncannily the

darkness of the smoke-filled room. Below him he could hear an excited chattering, rising now and then to hysterical cries.

He got to his feet, coughing and dizzy, but the smoke was so thick he sank to his hands and knees, and followed the walls of the room until he came to the door that led to the hall. Once in the hall, he found the smoke less dense, but the heat was terrific. Below him he could see the stairs were a mass of flame.

Somehow he managed to grope his way down one flight. He made his way through an open door with the hope of finding a window that opened on the street, but here again the smoke was so thick that he was forced to lay with his head close to the floor, gasping for breath.

He was worming his way to the hall again, when he heard a sound in the room behind him—something that seemed neither a shriek nor a moan, but which partook of the nature of both. Cautiously he felt his way toward it, and presently, in one corner, he came upon a low iron bed on which lay a helpless old woman, evidently deserted by the other occupants of the floor in their wild flight for safety.

She was moaning unintelligibly, and seemed utterly beside herself in the terror of her plight. Already in the street outside Riordan could hear the clatter and hoarse shouts as the first pieces of fire apparatus arrived and unlimbered.

Lifting the woman from the bed, he staggered with her toward the hall. The whole hallway was now a roaring mass of flames. Any hope of escape that way was long since gone. With the woman in his arms, he crawled along the floor toward the front of the building, and after what seemed an endless journey, he gained a front room, the windows of which gave on the street.

The woodwork about him was blistering and smoking, and even as he lifted himself erect and sent the glass flying outward with a blow of his fist, the floor of the room burst into flames. In another moment he had kicked out the window, sash and all, and, catching his helpless burden around the waist with his left arm,

with his right he grasped the window-sill and swung out, dangling like a pendulum against the side of the building.

The fire momentarily grew hotter. He felt the arm, with which he grasped the sill, shrivel and grow numb with the heat. Below, as in a blur, he saw a ladder creeping up, up toward him, and with teeth biting through his lip, he grimly determined to hang on until it reached them. At last the end of the ladder plumped against the sill beside him. The dragging burden was lifted from his arms; then he was aware that he himself was being lifted from the sill.

He opened his eyes some moments later in the street below. He was propped against the wheel of a ladder-truck, and his right hand was rudely bandaged with a soiled handkerchief. Bending over him was a roundsman—the selfsame roundsman who had given him chase that morning from Matt Casey's saloon. Riordan smiled up at him sourly.

"I suppose you want me," he said feebly, "for the job I done on Flynn this morning! I aint goin' to make no fuss. He done me dirt an' got me fired from my job, an' I swore I'd do him, an' I did."

He got unsteadily to his feet. "I'm all right now. You'd better run me in."

The roundsman seemed not to have heard him. He was gazing abstractedly at the blazing building before him.

"Flynn come round all right at the hospital," he observed, apparently to no one in particular.

"He done me dirt an' got me fired," Riordan repeated in a colorless voice. "I was tryin' to go straight, but he bled me an' drove me to it. Come on! I feel all right now. I wont make no fuss."

The roundsman laid a hand on his shoulder and led him, not ungently, to the fire-rope which was stretched across the street.

"G'wan! Get t'ell out of here! Keep outside the rope, can't yer?" he ordered soulfully, lifting the rope and thrusting Riordan into the crowd.

# Cupid Ex Machina

BY INEZ HAYNES GILLMORE

Author of "April Fool," etc.

A SPICK and span new Chandos-Mercier glimmered, glowed, gleamed, and glittered at the curb. Irresistibly attracted, Nick Allerton examined it, absorbed. The door at the top of the brown stone steps opened and shut. He turned. A girl had come out. She was all in brown—brown khaki suit, brown hat, tiny brown gloves, pumps, and a long brown veil that streamed over her shoulders. Allerton, passing her on the stairs, dared a quick, sideways look. For she—her shining eyes going past him fixed themselves on the limousine marvel in a perfect rapture of appreciation. She was quite unaware of him or of any other profaning presence.

Allerton was shown immediately to the office. For a few minutes he submitted to various cryptic rites at the hands of the great specialist. But their interview was short.

"Well, young man," Dr. Dameron growled at last, "I guess we'll call those eyes of yours cured. But they won't stay cured as long as you continue to misuse them. The best thing for you to do is to take a vacation of two or three months and loaf around in the open air."

"Two months!" Nick laughed. "This is the first day of the two weeks that, by the exercise of sheer brawn and native impudence, I've managed to squeeze out of the office."

"Well then, keep in the open air as much as you can. Do you own an automobile?"

"I should say I didn't."

"Like autoing?"

"Crazy about it. I don't see what keeps me from embezzling to get a Chandos."

"You're as bad as my daughter," Dr. Dameron snorted. "The word 'automobile' would bring her back from the dead. Her mother accuses her of sleeping in her goggles."

There flashed on Nick's mental retina a picture of the girl he had seen coming down the stairs. His subconscious mind had worked well. He realized that she was a pretty little brown graceful creature, a

tiny, tawny wedge of face between tumbling torrents of soft brown hair.

"She's been trying to make up her mind whether she'd go to Japan this summer or get a Chandos-Mercier," Dr. Dameron went on, in his rumbling bass. "She finally decided on the automobile. Rob's just brought it up for her. She was going away for the day, but she's given up everything. Now she's waiting to send for a chauffeur to come up from the garage to show her how to run it."

"I saw it outside," Allerton said. He sighed reminiscently. "Last year I went off on my vacation with a gang of my classmates at the 'Tech.' They owned all kinds of cars, and I had a look at every genus and species before I got through. But it's the Chandos-Mercier for mine. I've only seen the 1906 model; they say 1907 is much improved."

"It's as full of tricks as a bag of snakes, according to Myrtle. I can't tell you anything about it—hate them myself; never get into one except when I have to."

"Still your own prescription wouldn't be a bad thing for you to follow," Allerton said as he caught up his hat. "You don't look over and above well yourself, doctor."

Dr. Dameron grunted. He was a big, bulky, bull-necked man, whose massive head and pasty, deeply lined face seemed to display an eternal conflict of brain with brawn.

"I feel well enough. All I need is a good laugh—I haven't laughed for two months. The heat and this eye-patching business have got on my nerves. I guess I'll go to Keith's to-night and see what they can do for me."

"Sorry I haven't a laugh with me."

The doctor grunted again.

The Chandos-Mercier was still empty. Allerton paused again to run a practiced eye admiringly over it. A flutter of something feminine on the other side of the car caught his attention. The pretty head of the khaki-girl was raised suddenly. Through the space between the glass screen and

the seat they gazed into each other's eyes. Involuntarily his hand went to his hat.

"It's a wonder, isn't it?" he burst out.

An answering spark kindled in her eyes. "I should say it was," she agreed enthusiastically, "and a 1907 model."

"Yes—it knocks 1906 into a cocked-hat."

"Six-cylinder motor—make-and-break ignition—with irridium contacts and low tension magneto—spark and throttle governed by the grips in the steering-wheel," she murmured, standing off a little.

Allerton smiled. "Automatic carburetter—gear-driven pumps, mechanical oiler—sliding-gear transmission." He whisked from front to back and from side to side.

A little jet of pretty laughter came from the khaki girl. "You must have studied the ads. as hard as I. Only I suppose it means something to you. It's all abacada-bra to me." She sighed.

"It means a good deal," he approved, stopping.

"And everything else about it just suits my idea of a touring-car." She dropped suddenly to a level deliciously feminine. "The coloring is perfect—that soft gray and yellow. And the lanterns are the loveliest ones made! Have you ever noticed—they're shaped just like helmets? I'm simply crazy about those big, revolving searchlights. Do you know the lanterns are almost the nicest part of an auto to me. If I had to choose I'd drive always at night."

"It's bully to find somebody as enthusiastic about the Chandos-Mercier as I am. I think I could take one apart and put it together blindfolded."

"Oh, could you?" She wondered at his extravagance in a voice so sweet that thrills began to run up and down his backbone. "Oh, I can't wait to learn to drive," she said half to herself.

A dazzling idea came to him. It exploded, as he considered it, into a dozen stars of suggestion. These dropped bushels of spark-like possibilities.

"Let me teach you," he urged breathlessly. "I've taught loads of people."

He liked the way she accepted his offer. First a straight, quick look into his eyes. Then a simple, "Oh, thank you very much—I'd love to have you." That instant readiness would come, only, he con-

jectured, from a girl who had never known any but the kind of man she could trust implicitly. Probably she had never experienced a disappointment or a disillusion.

Allerton made a prudent tour of the car. He kicked the tires, tightened a buckle in a strap over the hood, gave the key of the clock a twist, looked at the oil sight-feeds, cranked up, and when the engine was running freely and softly, he listened carefully to the coil-box, then, taking off the top, turned a screw or two.

The girl followed him with a look that was half rapture, half intense, concentrative watchfulness.

"All ready!" he said.

She jumped in beside him and, obedient to his hand on the wheel, the machine, graceful as a yacht, backed, wheeled, turned in half her length, and sped up Commonwealth Avenue.

The soft Indian summer-day was a-melt in an impalpable blue vapor that thickened to purple smoke at the end of the flaming street-vistas. Up a delicately faded arch of blue sky, the sun, swathed in diaphanous cloud, was making tedious progress. Every roof, *façade*, flagging was gleaming from the night's rain. Wordlessly they plied a careful way between the groups of children that were playing from park to sidewalk and from sidewalk back to park again. But, once on the boulevard, Allerton let out a reef here and there until the dusty, diamond-hard road looked like a leather belt revolving beneath them. From time to time he sounded the horn, and its soft, wavering gurgle, that ran from a high bell-note to a dying close, seemed to give an air of the hunt to their speed.

"Well, what do you think of the Chandos-Mercier?" he asked in triumph when they came to their first stop, held up by a freight-train, endlessly articulated.

"I think it's everything I expected," she returned, smiling brilliantly; "it's not driving, is it, it's flying. It's the only thing I know that's ever gone fast enough for me except the roller-coaster. Isn't it too bad that we can't go as fast as we want to? If people and horses and children and dogs didn't bother so much—and as for policemen—why don't anarchists explode them instead of harmless royalties!"



DRAWN BY ANGUS MAC DONALL

Allerton dared a quick, sideways glance



"I see you have the correct auto-outlook." He gazed at her amusedly.

She was worth looking at. Allerton's glance, deferentially cursory, had discovered that with her smile she let loose a net-work of dimples that played at both corners of her mouth. They were like tiny drops of umber, dropped on to her brown skin by some painter with an instinct for bewitching composition. Their speed had shaken her hair into myriads of ringlets, each curl a separate torrent of iridescence as the sun played on it. She took off her pivoting hat and stowed it away with a droll, "That will be about all for you," addressed to it.

"How much time have you?" he began tentatively.

He remembered that the doctor had said that his daughter had intended to give up the whole day to her machine. His question would give his companion a chance to indicate when she wanted to get rid of him.

"Oh, I have the whole day," she said frankly. "But it's much more necessary to consult your plans."

"I have the day free, as it happens. I'd like to take all the time that's necessary to teach you not only to run but to understand this machine."

"I want to know everything about it—every thing—every thing—I can't wait."

It seemed to him that her emphasis was the most enchanting thing he had ever listened to.

"Well, now suppose," he said, emboldened by so much enthusiasm, such impatience, "suppose we make down towards Marblehead—all the roads are sandpapered in that direction and it's a beautiful country. I want to get you out of the city as soon as possible."

"I think that would be lovely."

They shot over the track and down the state road.

After awhile they came on to a shady spot where the trees formed a tent-like arch over their heads. Allerton stopped, drew out his note-book, and explained the principle and the anatomy of the automobile, drawing sketch after sketch for her.

"It sounds appalling, doesn't it?" he ended. But she was listening as to a fairy-tale.

"A little," she admitted, "but fascinat-

ing. I've had a lot of books on the automobile out of the library but they puzzled me so—you make it so much plainer. It's no worse than chess, though. I learned to play chess and I'm going to learn this."

"Oh, do you like chess?" he exclaimed involuntarily.

"I adore it—only there's never anybody to play with."

Allerton thought wistfully of his own long, lonely evenings.

"Now go all over it again," she entreated.

He obeyed, plying her with questions until he was sure that his teaching had sunk in. And, again she drank it down as if it were wine.

Then they changed places, and for fifteen minutes or more he put her through a kind of drill—"exactly," she said, "as if I were taking a music-lesson."

"One—speed up your engine," he ordered, for starting; "two—set your speed-lever at first speed; three—drop your clutch; four—throttle down." For stopping; "one—throw off the clutch; two—put on the brake; three—slow down the engine."

And when her hands flew to these services mechanically, he let her go.

Of course, at first, she had the moments of pure paralysis that are typical of the amateur. She had the usual attacks of feminine tremor, when her judgment seemed to float crazily in little eddies of self-distrust. But even with the first such seizure, she followed accurately, if blindly, the cool directions with which he came to her rescue. And he kept up all the time a running comment of suggestion, of explanation, of examination.

"Careful how you drop in that clutch, now."

"No, that's not the spark, that's the throttle."

"Speed up your engine before you throw in the second speed or you'll stall it. There, she's knocking, bring your spark back."

"Yes, you ought to learn to steer with one hand so you'll have your right ready."

"What would you do now if you wanted to stop suddenly? Yes, that's right. Jam your clutch-pedal forward HARD. That

releases the clutch and sets the brake at the same time. Easy, isn't it? Don't forget. Try it again, now!"

"You must keep your left foot lightly on the clutch-pedal. There's no knowing what may happen to make you want to stop quick."

"Keep your eyes on the road—that's rule No. 1 in driving, and is important."

"See how far you can advance the spark now so as to get more speed without knocking; you'll find just the right place after a while by instinct."

"Remember, if you get frightened, just push your clutch forward as hard as you can—that'll stop her."

Her own answering comments came in little gasps from her curved lips.

"Oh, ginger, what's that funny noise?"

"I know I've smashed it this time!"

"Why, it's just like trying to pat your mouth and rub your stomach at the same time, isn't it?"

"Golly that man never'll know how near he was to heaven then, will he?"

"It's a great comfort how quickly it stops, isn't it?"

"Like it! I never experienced any thing so gorgeously, gloriously scrumptious in all my life!"

"Nasty, hateful, horrid things to laugh at me—except I always laugh at beginners, myself."

"Jolly! I guess that old lady would run if she knew that I was an amateur!"

He was astonished at her quickness, delighted with her presence of mind. At first, when aiming for one side of the road, the machine would turn, unaccountably

to her, to the opposite curb, he would lean over and give the wheel a quick, dexterous turn with his right hand that brought them back into the middle of the road. Their flying hands sometimes touched—her skin was as smooth as velvet, as cool as ivory. Sometimes he had to jam his foot against the clutch-pedal in a hurry, when a quick turn in the road showed congestion ahead.

It was thrilling to have her obey so docilely his curt order to put on the brake.

These efforts brought his head close to hers. At times the insidious breezes swept her floating ringlets across his lips and into his eyes. This did not annoy him as much as it did her. She had to stop occasionally to gather this by-product of the huge wad at her neck and, to peg it down with a vicious jab of a shell-pin. But invariably it broke out in another spot and his face would be bombarded by the flying tendrils.

"Don't help me the next time I get into

a fix," she ordered imperiously after a while. "I want to get out of it all by myself." She let out a little exasperated groan. "It's in turning round that I show the minimum of judgment in the maximum of peril."

Obedient to her orders, he sat dumb during the next panic.

She tore the road to strips, ran into a fence, scared a cow, and positively chewed the grassy triangle that marked the meeting of four highways.

Still he said nothing.

Once she stopped and put her head down on the wheel.

"Don't say a word to me," she snapped.



DRAWN BY ANGUS MAC DONALL

She tore the road to strips

"I'm only trying to work it out. Just think, there have been people who credited me with 'gumption.'"

But she accomplished the feat finally. She stopped a little way up the road to turn a roguish face over her shoulder.

"I'm the most wonderfulest girl in all the world," she said in the blythe accents of Peter Pan.

"Every time!" he assented.

He adored the way she attended to the business of learning. She was so matter-of-fact and sensible in her attitude, and yet she was so dainty, so demure. There was no chill in her air; she was as accessible as a child.

But Allerton knew there were a million of miles of social strata between them. She had not asked his name; he did not dare address her by hers. He thought of the women of his boarding-house with a sudden pang of distaste: two or three school-teachers—faded, etiolated; a metallic, business-like doctor; an opulent and highly pompadoured "buyer" for a department store.

Their progress was wobbly enough at first to excite amused smiles from the road. But it straightened by degrees. Passing machines gave them finally only the tribute of a prolonged stare at the intent, slender, brown-eyed girl, and the laughing young man whose hair blew away in such virile profusion from his happy face.

At last Allerton, confident of her ability to handle the car, leaned back at his ease and watched her. It seemed to him that her triumph was the prettiest thing in the whole pretty drama of their day together.

Bending slightly forward, her eyes under her long lashes fixed straight ahead, her teeth gnawing at her sternly-set line of red lip, she gave her whole being and consciousness up to the delight in her skill.

"These are wonderful roads," he said once.

"They look like the rings of Saturn to me," she announced.

"Have you chanced to notice that it is very pretty country we're passing through?"

"You can judge. Thus far I've seen nothing but banks of rosy mist to left and to right—rainbows, auroras, and shooting-stars like electric-fountains where the sky used to be; I should say it was a pretty

country—it's Arcadia, Arden, Eden. Please don't bore me with anything commonplace. Unless you can talk in lyrics and madrigals you'd better keep silent altogether."

This was said to so charming an accompaniment of dimples that it was impossible to be offended. He gave himself up again to the delight of watching her as, suddenly, her little head darted down and forward, like, he thought, some new and divine species of turtle. He applauded when she cut cleanly between the two approaching vehicles.

And now they hummed over the road. The country spun by like a stretched wire—blue-green strips of sea alternating with green-black patches of wood, and both breaking into stretches of velvety lawn that ran up to the big summer-places.

They ate lunch in one of the little eating-houses perched on the Marblehead rocks and overlooking a harbor so full of yachts that it looked as if a huge flock of silver-winged birds had settled for an instant. His companion's eyes absorbed this with many "Ohs" of admiration. But her look kept straying anxiously out to where the Chandos-Mercier stood, now, alas, spotted like a pard from reckless encounters with many puddles. This child-like pleasure in her new toy delighted him. She caught his glance once.

"I'm afraid if I take my eye off of it, it will vanish," she said soberly; "you don't know what this means to me."

But after a while she began to talk of other things—her triumph over her own ignorance and her sense of her efficiency seemed to have exhilarated her. Allerton talked, too; the romance of the situation brought out all that was best in him. Yet through all his sense of enjoyment there kept protruding the ache of the thought of how soon it must end.

"Do you want to go back now, or shall we push on?" he asked as they came out. "We can go on a little way and still get back before dark."

"Oh, let's go on!" she urged fervently. "I can't get enough of it. I don't know what you'll think of me," she concluded in another shamefaced second.

His heart leaped. "Of course I'm think-



DRAWN BY ANGUS MAC DONALL

She was listening as to a fairy tale

ing very ill of you for giving a lonesome dufler the pleasure of your society."

She was willing to carry on a conversation with him now, and as they sped through quaint Salem and beautiful Beverly, their tongues competed in speed with the car.

At two she stopped and consulted her little gun-metal watch.

"I'm afraid we'll have to turn now," she said and her face grew quiet, even a little sad. "I guess I'll let you run her back; I feel tired."

As they struck the Beacon Boulevard again, he asked, "Shall I take you home or to the garage?"

She considered this. "I think I'd like to go to the garage. I've never been in one."

"Which one?" he asked.

"Which one?" she repeated curiously. Then she laughed a little. "Why, really, it makes no difference to me."

"But where have you been keeping it?" he asked mystified.

"Keeping what?" This after a pause in which her brow crumpled in bewilderment.

"Why, this car, of course."

She stared at him through another blank pause. But her perplexity grew to uneasiness.

"What are you talking about?" she demanded at last with a strange frankness. "Are you crazy or are you asking my advice. What have I to do with this car?"

"My dear Miss Dameron," he said, a little irritated at her sudden density, "I'm simply asking you to which garage you wish me to take your car."

The uneasiness in her eyes sharpened to alarm.

"My name isn't Dameron, in the first place," she said, "and I don't know what you mean by calling this my car."

"Your name isn't Dameron," he said in a stupefied way. "Perhaps you're going to tell me that you're not the doctor's daughter."

He was beginning his statement in a tone of sarcastic skepticism, but a sudden conviction ploughed through his brain like a red-hot bullet.

"Great heavens, whose car is this?"

She paled—horrified.

He stared frozen.

"Isn't it yours?" dropped from her lips in a whisper.

"Isn't it yours?" His eyes entreated her to say, "Yes."

Allerton brought the machine to a stop. He turned and addressed his companion.

"Pinch me, if I am dreaming. If it's a joke, please stop it. I thought you were Dr. Dameron's daughter," he went on, clutching at realities like a drowning man at a straw.

"Dr. Dameron said that his daughter had just bought a new Chandos-Mercier and was going to send to the garage for a man to come up and show her how to run it. That's why I offered to teach you."

"I thought it was your car," she faltered. "When I came out from consulting Dr. Dameron about my eyes, I thought you were just getting out of it."

His voice was casual in tone when he said:

"I guess I've stolen an automobile."

Then his sense of humor came to his rescue and his mood broke. Hers, being feminine, came a second later. But presently they were laughing together in an unappeasable fit of mirth.

"Do you suppose there are policemen and detectives on our track?" she said in a frightened tone later.

He broke out afresh. "He told me to go automobiling for my eyes—"

"I would like to explain to you," she interrupted him diffidently after he had re-assured her, "how I came to accept your invitation. I don't know what you'll think of me for what I've done. But all my life I've been crazy about machinery. I went to a World's Fair once and I spent nearly every blessed minute at the machinery exhibit. There's something about it that actually excites me and—"

He broke into her explanation with an awed, "Are there women like that, too?"

"Ever since automobiles came out I've been crazy about them. I've haunted automobile-shows until my head swam—I've read the automobile ads. until I couldn't see."

"Oh I've been all through that," he sympathized.

"I work in the *Two Worlds* office," she went on steadily. "And when I have



nothing else to do, I amuse myself trying to pick out the various machines that pass my window. Sometimes I can distinguish them by the noise they make. My vacation began to-day and I decided to learn how to drive a car instead of spending my money boarding in some stupid country town. I was just going down to the garage to see about it when I came out of Dr. Dameron's. You can fancy how I felt when you offered to teach me to drive a Chandos-Mercier—a 1907 model, too. Why I've never even been in an automobile before. It was like picking up the Kohinoor out of a gutter. I guess you'll think I'm a pretty queer girl."

He could not tell her all that he thought of her. Besides, he was tingling all over with the delight that those immovable social strata were swept away.

"I think you are just what a girl ought to be," he said to the averted profile. "And you've got a natural instinct for the automobile. I never saw anybody take hold so. Now, you let me take you home and I'll go round to Dr. Dameron and explain."

"No," she said resolutely, and inwardly he applauded her for her pluck and sense of fair play. "If there's any trouble about it, I want to share it; it's just as much my fault as yours."

"Very well."

They looked into each other's eyes. Then involuntarily they held out their hands to a firm clasp.

"Do you mind telling me what your name is," he said, still holding her hand. "Mine is Nicholas Allerton and I'm an electrical-engineer."

"Mine is Eunice Vaughan," she said simply. "I board on Hilton street in Roxbury, but my people live in Middleborough."

Allerton insisted that she remain in the car while he confronted the doctor.

Dr. Dameron laughed, and his laughter was the homeric mirth, typical of the great. First he smiled, then he laughed, then he roared, then he howled. He cackled and bellowed. He coughed and groaned. He

grunted and wheezed. Allerton kept concluding mistakenly, as each paroxysm graded off into a series of chuckles, that his mirth had spent itself. But another spasm would eventually seize him and he would explode into indescribable cacophony.

"Well," he said, at last, "that's the best story I've heard in a long time. I wish you could have seen Myrtle's face when she discovered her bubble-cart had melted into thin air."

"I hope she'll pardon me," Allerton stammered, "and you, too, doctor. More than anything I want her to realize how innocent Miss Vaughan was in the matter."

The doctor nodded.

"Pardon you! I should think I would. You've given me my first laugh in months."

Then he jumped to his feet and dashed out of the room. When he came back he was shaking again and wiping his eyes.

"Myrtle says it's all right; she's out talking with Miss Vaughan now. Do you think Miss Vaughan's a pretty girl, Allerton?"

"Pretty?"

"I see your eyesight's all right."

The doctor's glance began to twinkle again.

"Now, it happens that Myrtle's had another change of heart. She's going down to Newport for three weeks and she says she'll pardon you both, but only on condition—that you exercise the Chandos-Mercier every day while she's gone. Do you agree to do that?"

"Agree!" To Allerton's excited imaginations, vistas opened in every direction into the land of heart's desire.

"But mind you," the doctor went on, still twinkling, "you're to take nobody else but Miss Vaughan."

Allerton twinkled back. "You bet I don't take any more than the original cargo," he said.

But all unknown to him the original cargo had contained a small, nude, cherubic gentleman who even then, with an air of languid satisfaction, was putting a pair of spent arrows back into his quiver.



DRAWN BY FRED WOODS

"The Burning of Rome"

## At the Call of the Heathen

BY HUGH PENDEXTER

Author of "Tiberius Smith," etc.

MRS. Peevy lifted her fat hands in timid dismay and searched her visitor's face anxiously before she cried, "Abbie, you can't mean it."

Miss Bunker, thin and decisive of presentment and attired in a discord, drew down her sharp chin in affirmance of her first statement of fact and repeated stoutly, "You must either advance or slide back, Mellie. There is no standing still in this life, and we can only advance by self culture."

"It sounds awfully discouraging," complained the widow, letting her hands fall limply in her ample lap, while her eyes rolling upward accentuated the worry of her broad face. "Now, Abbie, do you think it is as necessary as that?"

"Poets, Poetesses, and Principles," should be in every home," declared Miss Bunker firmly, tapping a gayly decorated book with an index-finger.

"Oh, dear," lamented Mrs. Peevy, now quite helpless under the unflinching gaze,

"I only wish Caleb was alive to advise me. I feel, Abbie, as if I can't afford it when I'm only gitting eight dollers a month pension. Do you really think it would help me?"

"Help you, Mellie!" broke in Miss Bunker enthusiastically, in a voice radiating warmth and sincerity, as she turned the volume to display its full charms, "why, I don't believe a day would pass but what you'd be better for having it in the house. It's a moral uplifter. It—it elevates. Jest see what it takes up. It tells all about—umph—Poets and—hm yes, Poetesses—"

"Their wives?" interjected Mrs. Peevy weakly.

"Not necessarily," frowned Miss Bunker, now searching the pages hurriedly and growing irritated because she could not readily turn to a picture.

"Then how could they have had any principles?" gasped Mrs. Peevy, drawing down her mouth while her double-chin

seemed to repeat the interrogation. "Abbie, tell me, the book isn't unmoral, is it?"

"No, Mellie, no," assured Miss Bunker testily. "But every poetess isn't married, nor is every poet."

"I always s'posed a poetess was a poet's wife," humbly apologized the widow, retreating from the dignity of her doubt. "But as I was mistook, of course—" and her gaze wandered mechanically to the clock, under which she kept a lean purse.

"You're always ready to admit a mistake, Mellie. That's one of your best ways," interposed Miss Bunker, with a patient smile, as she followed the hesitant glance. "As I was saying, Mellie, you must advance, or slide backwards."

"It sounds like a threat," shuddered the widow, squirming, and again assuming the defensive. "I'm sure, Abbie, I've always managed to git along. Tell me, really now, do poets have more principle than other folks?"

Miss Bunker's puritanical upbringing caused her to pause a bit, but finally she returned, "It would seem so, Mellie, or why put 'em in such a lovely binding."

"Oh, dear," sighed the widow, opening and closing her hands uncertainly, "if Caleb hadn't been shot for the government! But it's hard, Abbie, for a lone and lorn woman to decide, when she's only got eight dollers a month pension and her hen-money."

"Such a pretty binding," mused Miss Bunker gently, squinting diagonally across the cover.

"The binding is pretty," agreed the widow her eyes warming as they noticed the chromatic debauch. "But law's sakes!

How am I to tell whether I am buying it for the binding or the book? Oh, dear! If there was only a law compelling folks to bind books homely instead of pretty. What did you say the price was?"

"A doller'n a half," and Miss Bunker's gaze burned as she leaned forward to confidentially whisper in addition, "but probably you can never buy it for that again."

"Law's sakes!" murmured Mrs. Peevy.

"No, Mellie, I don't believe you ever can. But don't say nothing, as the pub-

lishers might not like my mentioning it. Of course I wouldn't, except to a friend like you, who I want to get every advantage in buying. Perhaps I ought to have waited until the stage brings over the mail to-night," and she halted to meditate gravely. "You see, even now, there may be a letter on the way to me, saying the price has riz. And by letting you have it for a doller'n a half I may be losing all my profits. I dunno but what—"

"Abbie, do you really think there is any chance of the price rising?" demanded Mrs. Peevy nervously, while her rotund features collected into a hungry and covetous expression.

"I knew a man once," murmured Miss Bunker slowly, closing one eye to get an exact perspective of the facts, "who refused to buy a book. Said he didn't believe in books; pooh-poohed the idea, and simply wouldn't buy it. Then the price went up fifty cents and he had lost his chance."

"Shan't you give up!" cried Mrs. Peevy. "Was it the 'Poets and Poetesses,' Abbie?"

"I can't say as to that, Mellie, but



DRAWN BY FRED WOODS

"If the price goes up between now and morning, don't blame me"

there!" And she reached the book forward and placed it on the table and clapped her hands in gentle ecstasy, "How well it looks. How it becomes the room!"

"But, Abbie," defended Mrs. Peevy from the last ditch, and with a voice that almost whimpered, "do I need it? Is it worth a dollar'n fifty cents to me? If Caleb Peevy hadn't got shot in the South and was here, would he advise me to take it? I know it looks pretty on the table. I s'pose it would show off even better if I got out the album and placed it side of it. Oh, I don't know what to say, Abbie. Couldn't I take it and try it for a week, and then—"

"I was in to see Mrs. Tompkins," laughed Miss Bunker in grim confidence. "Not to sell her a book, mind you, but to see about a pound-party for the pastor. And would you believe it, with all her husband's money she aint got such a rich looking table as that is now. Jest look at the pictures—hm—ah—yes, this one," and she fluttered the leaves desperately. "Now let's see—ah—yes, the 'Silver Moon.' Isn't it sweet?"

Mrs. Peevy viewed it numbly, unable to break the spell until Miss Bunker had softly turned the page, then she irrelevantly observed, "There was a young college chap around with a book last summer that I wanted pesky bad. It seemed a shame I couldn't afford it. He left it with me to look over and I enjoyed the pictures all one afternoon. It was about Injun fighters and the pictures was colored—"

"Mellie," gasped Miss Bunker, settling back in dismay; "to think you would be interested in anything so coarse!"

"I didn't buy it," apologized Mrs. Peevy hurriedly. "I was jest saying he left it. Now, Abbie, why couldn't you leave this—"

"There is more—hm—" and she rapidly ran over in her tardy mind the descriptions as tabulated in the booklet of instructions, "yes—more action in this picture—'The Fall of Babylon.'"

"I like that better," decided Mrs. Peevy, devouring the scene eagerly. "It reminds me of a picture of the Johnston Flood that is in Eliza Weeks' book, 'Great Horrors of the World.' If you could leave this a few days—"

But Miss Bunker, now discouraged, had already closed the covers and was sourly drawing on her gloves. "If the price goes up between now and morning, Mellie, don't blame me," she reminded coldly, rising to depart.

"Abbie, you don't think it will?" cried the widow, her forehead gathering three creases of perturbation. "If I could have a little time to think. If Caleb was only here!"

"Of course, it's too bad," soothed Miss Bunker, sweeping slowly to the door. "I know jest how you would dote on the 'Burning of Rome.' It's so real you can almost hear the—the—"

"Fire company!" cried Mrs. Peevy, fumbling her apron-hem. "I should like to see that one. Abbie, I always liked fires."

"Hear the flames and smoke," corrected Miss Bunker icily. Then reflectively, "And so many was killed. Such a picture to teach one principle. Remember, Mellie, for your own good I say it: You must either advance or slide back."

"But I can't afford it," expostulated the widow. Then as the door swung smartly to, she staggered to the clock and choked feebly, "Oh, dear! I wish I knew what was best. There! she's gone. Abbie, I say! Abbie, come back. I'll take it."

But Miss Bunker, now hurrying down the walk in an excess of petulance and swishing her skirts angrily, did not hear the tearful surrender, but continued her way disconsolate. It was so difficult to sell 'Poets, Poetesses, and Principles' and she needed the commissions sadly.

Like her, only lacking in decision, Mrs. Peevy often found her narrow horizon looming large with threatened mishaps. At the best it required skilful economy for the widow to evade the many menaces that constantly beset her financial path. And when her meager income was taxed to meet some little luxury, such as occasionally her wavering mind urged her to indulge in, the result could but be tearful and heavy with repentance. A latent germ of prudence, perhaps no larger than a pin-head, now feebly whispered that "Poets, Poetesses, and Principles," at one dollar-fifty per volume, was out of the question.

Yet her soul clamored for it loudly, once it was removed from her ken, and with three precious half-dollars in her agitated palm she rolled heavily to the front gate and turned her eyes up and down the dusty road in search of the tempter.

"Oh, dear," she muttered, "why did she speak of fires! If it wasn't for that I might have stood it. If only Caleb—Mr. Withem, have you seen Abigail Bunker?"

The old man, leading a cow, came to a stumbling halt and struck awkwardly at

tion. What if Mrs. Tompkins had already purchased the book! Abigail spoke true when she said the delectable volume gave a grace and finish to table and room that Mrs. Tompkins could never hope to possess so long as she stuck to somber covers.

And with this one thought impelling her the widow snatched up a shawl, and in perspiring haste picked a dusty path to the Tompkins' place.

She met Miss Bunker glumly leaving by the side gate, but apprehension had



DRAWN BY FRED WOODS

"You'd be better for having it in the house"

his charge for stepping on his foot, and then eyed the widow dully before replying, "Hey?"

"Have you seen Abigail Bunker?" repeated the widow less eagerly, for already she was beginning to regret her haste and was slowly arriving at the sad conclusion it was better thus.

"See her goin' inter Mis' Tompkins' house a minute ago. Come on, consarn ye." The last to the cow.

The intelligence caused a wave of alarm to sweep over the widow, engulfing in one swift rush the last vestige of discre-

dulled her physical vision and she could only pant, "Abbie, have you—tell me—have you sold it?"

Miss Bunker's acrid features at once assumed a baffling, inscrutable expression, but her cautious voice trembled with suppressed emotion as she inquired, "Why do you ask, Mellie?"

Mrs. Peevy allowed her wrap to drop negligently about her waist, and the hand containing the clinking silver was raised mechanically to brush back some disheveled locks as she faltered, "If you had, I wanted it—that is, if you hadn't, I wanted



to speak about it. You see, Abbie, it's that picture, Rome on fire. It—it haunts me. Couldn't I look at it?"

Miss Bunker immediately shifted her burden under her jacket and surveyed her perturbed friend with a cold, calculating eye.

"If there hadn't been splendid poetry writ about it, and if there wasn't so much principle in it, they'd never have printed it—it's so blood-curdling," she informed.

"Abbie, couldn't you make it a dollar?" This desperately.

"A dollar'n a half, and probably more to-morrow."

"Couldn't I borrow it to-night and tell you to-morrow if I'd take it?"

"No, Mellie," refused Miss Bunker sorrowfully. "I'd like to, mortally, but Mrs. Tompkins would never buy if she knew I'd lent it."

"But you haven't agreed to sell her, Abbie, dear! Abigail, tell me, you haven't sold it?"

And Mrs. Peevy's hand shook as she opened her palm and eagerly extended the silver.

"I was waiting to see you again," explained Miss Bunker, allowing her fingers to hover over the money. "Do you want it? Ah, I almost wish I had kept it for myself. Such a picture! But I must hurry on. Do-you-want-it?" And a golden glow was allowed to diffuse from the corner of the jacket.

"I guess I'll wait—no, no, here! Take the money," cried the widow hysterically.

It was no sooner said than the spinster's thin hand shot down like a fish-hawk making a strike, and before the widow could recover even a semblance of limp composure she was standing alone, holding "Poets, Poetesses, and Principles" in two shaky hands.

Really, she had remembered it as a larger book, she told herself, as she trailed her skirts over the dust-covered foot-path for home. The binding, too, seemed less vivid. She tried to persuade herself this was only a morbid delusion, and in mute refutation she held the thing aloft that the low rays of the sinking sun might have fair play. But, no; it simply did not shine with the luster her heated imagination had anticipated. And by the time she had

reached her gate she could have wept at her folly.

"If it wasn't for that pesky fire," she weakly defended herself against the onslaught of aroused prudence. "If it had been more about moons, or—or—weather," and she sobbed distinctly, "I could have stood it."

Then chastened, but with a heavy heart, she lighted a lamp to abet the good-night sunbeams, and sniffing dejectedly, drew up to the window and mournfully opened the pages haphazard. She would not hasten to find the fire, she told herself; in fact, it mattered but little now whether she found it or not. Possibly it were better to wait until the morrow. But, behold! Her unwitting fingers had already turned to the page. And bringing low her lachrymose gaze she prepared to moodily enjoy her only compensation. Then as she looked she groaned aloud in an excess of dismay, and cried,

"Abbie, it don't seem like a fire. There aint no one killed. Oh, dear! I've paid my money for a fog!"

And truth would compel the most careful observer to confess that "The Burning of Rome" was not of the realistic school but consisted entirely of a few impulsive impressions that might be mistaken with equal celerity for either smoke, waves, or mud.

It was a sad blow for Mrs. Peevy. At first she tried to console herself with the suggestion she had been hasty in condemning the picture. She smiled wanly and tried to be optimistic as time after time she adjusted her blurred spectacles and studied the print. Come! the caption said "The Burning of Rome." It must be there, else why print the picture. Now a scrutiny sideways would probably bring out the artist's subtle conception. Then her whole being groaned a negative after vainly applying every test, and her face was drawn with misery as she tottered to the clock and quickly counted her remaining store.

"If I could only go back a few hours," she moaned, "and be as I was when Abigail Bunker first come on her pesky errand. If I could only be placed back at 5 o'clock and meet her and firmly say, 'No, Miss Bunker; none of your wares to-day.'"



DRAWN BY FRED WOODS

"If it had been more about moons-o-or-weather"

Then with feverish energy she lived over the scene, and in a variety of ways saw herself stoutly resisting all inducements. But following this futile fancy was always the book before her, a grim reality; always mocking and jeering, until the very clock seemed to join in the derision and maliciously tick, "Bought—book—no—fire—bought—book," and so on throughout the long night.

But the widow was not one to suffer in silence. Her moral fiber was not of that sensitive quality that calls for concealment of one's woes, and she was ready to stand before the whole world, inviting pity, if the cause of her sorrow could thereby be belittled. Her canvass of the neighborhood began with the morning sun and was two-fold in its object. She sought sympathy for her heedless waste of the pension money, and as this cost nothing, she was felicitated in several homes.

But her quest for the more material dollar and a half was bootless. She had entertained the morbid belief that someone might take the volume off her hands,

and possibly a purchaser had been found had she not always prefaced her proposal with a lugubrious arraignment of all verse-makers, coupled with the avowal there was no semblance of a conflagration in the entire work. Then, as a last resort, when the completed effort had fallen dead, she dragged her despairing feet to Miss Bunker's home and begged that the bargain be rescinded.

The spinster, however, had sold but the one volume, and the request impressed her as being only undesirable.

"Mellie," she suggested mechanically, "build for character. Seek—er—self culture. Books is our best friends. Advance and don't slide back. Fight for principle."

"But, Abigail," remonstrated the widow, "it aint a fire. It's—it's a mistake. I was depending on a fire. Why can't you take it back and give me my money? Probably there is lots of folks who would take it off your hands as quick as all git-out. I wonder you don't sell it to the fish-peddler; he looks like a bookish man. Mebbe, too, at the end of a week I would be more

reconciled and would buy it in earnest."

"You have," reminded Miss Bunker grimly. "Now, Mellie, I can't stop to talk about it. I'm in a hurry to go to the church and help arrange for our annual Christmas-box for the heathen. We must start it next week, or it won't get there in time. Only think how sweet it is—our working now to give the poor heathen a Christmas! Parson Crabtree, of Page's Center, is to be here when we pack the box."

It needed only this to complete the widow's dejection. She had been so thoughtless as to forget the gift-box. She had planned and schemed months to donate something and now her extravagance cried a halt. In cultivating the poets she had eliminated herself as a factor in Christmas cheer beyond the sea.

"Well, Abigail," she sighed in dry despair, as she rose to resume her weary way, "I'm punished more'n you know. I've spent my hard come-by dollar'n a half and now for the first year I can't give anything to the box. Oh, Caleb Peevy! If you could see me now you'd be ashamed for having such a fool for a widdier."

And thus condemning self she tucked her library under an arm and returned to her cheerless home.

In the days that followed she evidenced a slight change. Not that she ceased making her daily rounds, or abandoned wailing recitals. But she had given up hope. Her plaint was industriously continued, but the old feverish anxiety was lacking. It seemed as if her sorrow was becoming mellow with age, and if "Poets, Poetesses, and Principles" accompanied her on many a woeful mile it was purely as a monument to lost hope.

Far and near each home was invaded, and the disquieting volume weepingly offered for sale; yet the manner of her approach was perfunctory. By the end of the week she was dispiritedly asking only a dollar, and it was obvious she did not expect to get it. Mrs. Tompkins heard of it with a smile and shrewdly decided the market would yet fall to fifty cents. But as Mrs. Peevy gradually began to enlarge on her inability to contribute to the box, the book was left at home, and she cited it only as a cause for effect. And as

preparations for filling the box were perfected and each household derived deep enjoyment in its little plans, the widow was forced to conclude she could not give so much as a pair of home-knit mittens, and the whole neighborhood was conscious of her repining.

Some said it "served her right," for thinking first of self; while Miss Bunker confidentially declared to Mrs. Tompkins that her friend was surely "sliding back." To Parson Crabtree she repeated this contention with heavy regret, and explained, "I've told Mellie time and time again that she could not stand still, but must either advance or slide back. She ain't gone ahead a foot."

Mrs. Peevy, however, on meeting the cleric, was despondently insistent she had not catered to self in squandering her money. "I'll admit, parson," she huskily confessed, "that now I've got the book I enjoy it in a dismal way. Most of the pieces are sad and depress me and I should miss them awfully. But when I took that dollar'n a half out of my pension money I'd plum forgot about the box. If I'd only remembered, wild hosses couldn't have dragged it from me. Oh, if only Caleb Peevy could have stepped in jest for a minute and said, 'Mellie, remember the heathen!' I almost feel guilty when I set down at night to read a piece and think how nothing from Mellie Peevy will go to cheer the natives. But I'm lone and lorn and my husband died of wounds got in fighting for the government. He came home to die, you know. Did I ever show you the bullet that killed him? I was going to bury it, but Abigail Bunker said I ought to keep it as it might be identified some day. Now if you feel like buying the book for—"

But the parson, always mildly skeptical, despite his great faith, in making his meager and casual salary meet the store bills, timidly backed away, saying,

"Do what you can, Sister Peevy. If you really believe there is a way to contribute and have faith enough, there will surely be a way."

"I didn't know," she groaned, "but what selling the book to you was the way, and that you was a instrument."

He colored a bit and hesitated; then

shaking his white locks, for he was an old man, he faced her honestly and declared, "Sister Peevy, you know how little money I see during the year. If I could believe I was the instrument I'd take it in a wink. If the feeling comes to me that I ought to take it, I will let you know as soon as I can, but I don't feel that way now. However, we'll wait and see. I never yet purposely disappointed the Almighty. But we'll see."

That night, the night before the box was to be nailed up, peace came to the widow. It seemed a bit hard at first, and yet it off-set her indiscretion and she found a world of solace as she sat by the table and slowly picked her way through several rather obscure verses. If Caleb were alive conditions would be different; as it was, she could walk only according to her light. Then as she turned the page, a gentle rap called her to the door and she found herself face to face with Parson Crabtree.

"I believe, Sister Peevy," he announced cheerily, "that I am the instrument, after all. I'll admit it didn't come to me as a revelation, but as I thought it over and remembered how I told you to have faith, I couldn't honestly think of any one in the neighborhood whom the Lord would send here for that book but me, his humble and lowly agent. So, I'll take it at the same price you paid."

Mrs. Peevy pressed the volume, still held in her hand, close to her agitated bosom, and in a weak voice whispered,

"You'll really buy it? I can have my dollar'n a half? Well, parson, it's pesky good of you. Aint the ways of Providence strange! I shall be mortally glad to git my money. I—"

Then breathing deeply, while her eyes grew big and round, she remembered.

"Oh, dear! I forgot. No, I can't let

you have it, parson. The Lawd sent you too late—"

"Sister Peevy," expostulated the cleric, "the Lord never sends anybody too late."

"Oh, I don't mean that, parson. When you first spoke I was awfully pleased, but you aint the instrument. No, after I left you this afternoon I got to thinking and I saw my way clear. It means a sacrifice, but Mellie Peevy is used to them. It aint right for you to do it. I'll admit it's pesky hard not to take that money, but I know it be right. No, you can't buy the book;

nobody can, for no money. If I got back my money I wouldn't be making the other sacrifice. I'll—I'll keep it."

The parson demurred a bit, but nevertheless looked somewhat relieved on taking his departure. Down in his heart he had failed to believe it was his duty to make the offer, but his generous nature had impelled him to do it. After he had gone the widow reverted to her old train of sorrowful thought and temptation tugged hard. But as she remembered her new resolve and the ease of mind it had brought her she grew stronger, and soon was again tranquil and even rejoicing she had not allowed the parson to answer an echo.

"Here comes Mellie Peevy," ran a whisper around the vestry as she slowly, but sadly triumphant, marched up the center of the room on the morrow, proudly carrying a large parcel so enveloped in wrapping-paper as to convey the impression of being an extra heavy change of clothing for some benighted resident of the tropics.

The contribution was so impressive, compared with the other offerings, that it attracted Parson Crabtree's attention, and he smiled approvingly.

"It's the best a lone woman can do," sighed Mrs. Peevy, tenderly placing her gift in the center of the box.

"The widow's mite, but a very large



DRAWN BY FRED WOODS

"Books is our best friend"

and generous mite," smiled the cleric gently. "But I'm afraid you've exceeded your means, Sister Peevy. I'm afraid I was the instrument, after all, and have failed."

"Well, parson," confessed Mrs. Peevy, "mebbe I've done more'n a lone widder living on eight dollars a month pension is expected to do, but them as say that Mellie Peevy can't advance and only slides back, may believe different now. If Caleb Peevy hadn't died of wounds received in battle I'd do more. No; you wa'n't no instrument, although I was self-ish enough to hope so for about a minute last night."

"I must talk with you further, Sister Peevy," declared the cleric earnestly. "Of wounds received in battle, eh? Just so."

Thus did Mrs. Peevy number herself among the proud contributors, and thus was she held up by Parson Crabtree as an example for the more worldly to pattern

after. Incidentally, he did talk with her again, and before she realized it he had a full statement made out of Caleb's war record, where and when he was wounded, and the date of his death. And although she blindly signed her signature in shaky, fat letters, to several papers, she did not appreciate the full import of the cleric's curiosity until notified she was entitled to twelve dollars a month pension instead of eight, just because the government had been reminded her husband died of wounds 'received in action.'

"Think of it!" she gasped to the sour-faced Miss Bunker: "Four dollars a month more, Abbie! Why, I feel rich. And here I could have had it all along if only some one had taken any interest. To think it all came about through that blessed gift."

"Mellie," demanded Miss Bunker sternly, "what was your gift? Mrs. Tompkins said it was clothes, but I hefted it and said it was china. Eliza Weeks wanted to unwrap it, but the parson wouldn't hear



DRAWN BY FRED WOODS

"The widow's mite," smiled the cleric gently



to it. Now, Mellie, what was your gift?"

"Oh, Abbie, it come pesky hard. It—it was a sacrifice," faintly sighed the widow. "I had suffered so much it didn't seem as if it was necessary, yet I had to do it. Oh, I'm glad now it's all come out so good. But for twenty-four hours I had to fight myself to keep from being selfish. And now the good Lawd and the government, prodded up by the parson—I'm speaking of the government as the Lawd and the parson working together—has give me four dollers extra a month. Why, what shall I ever do with all that money coming in steady every month?"

"Mellie, will you tell me the natur' of that gift?" pursued Miss Bunker.

"Mercy, yes, Abbie. Don't snap a body's head off. I'm trying to as fast as I can. Don't you remember how you told me we must advance, or slide back? Well, I got to thinking over it, and says I, 'Mellie Peevy, what about the heathen? Wont they slide back?' And that decided me and I then seen my way clear—although it seemed pesky hard at first."

"But what did you give, Mellie?" cried Miss Bunker in despair.

Mrs. Peevy drew up her portly form complacently and replied, "As there is no standing still for nobody in this life, and as we must advance or slide back, I sent to the heathen them 'Poets, Poetesses, and Principles.'"

## The Bad Luck of Kaptan Holar

BY J. J. BELL

Author of "The Thousandth Whale," etc.

THE Norwegian steamer *Ole Bull*, carrying seven hundred tons of coal and sundry stores from Leith to her company's *hval-station* on the northeast coast of Iceland, was jogging past the Faroe Islands at her average speed of nine knots. It was eleven o'clock on an evening towards the end of June, and had the weather been clear the sun would have still been visible in the north. A wet fog blanketed the Faroes, some six miles to port; only the strange peaks of Fugloe and Svinoe loomed dimly above the vapor bank. On the sea, however the fog was thinning, and the captain of the *Ole Bull* sighted the little whaler in time to avoid the necessity of an abrupt change of course. He said something to the man at the wheel, and telegraphed an order to the engine-room.

The engines were slowed, stopped, and reversed a couple of turns, and the *Ole Bull* came to rest within hailing distance of the whaler-steamer *Gisli*, which was wallowing idly in the heavy, oily swell. The captains, one on his high narrow bridge, the other in his little square steering-box, bawled cheerfully across the water. They were old friends from Tonsberg, but their

courses seldom met or crossed during the whaling season.

"It is a lucky meeting, Bjarri," the captain of the *Ole Bull* shouted, after he had asked concerning the *Gisli's* recent hunting and got an unsatisfactory reply. "I bring you luck. I am glad I met you. It is not ten minutes since we sighted a cachalot."

The young captain of the *Gisli* fairly jumped. "Cachalot!" he yelled. Then, "You are sure?"

"Do I not know a cachalot when I see him? His head—his rising—his spout? And he was going slow—very slow—south. And he was the biggest—"

But the young captain was already giving orders to his crew, and calling down the tube to his engineer.

He waved his hand to his friend, bawled his thanks, promised a merry meeting at Tonsberg in October, and turned to his business. For the cachalot is a rare visitor to these waters, and is worth several large rorquals—the "finner" whales on which the Norwegians make much war and some profit—and young Kaptan Andersen had never yet had the fortune to encounter such a prize.

So the *Ole Bull* resumed her journey north, and the *Gisli* went dancing south, her thin black funnel belching smoke, her eighty-five feet of deck quivering. Kaptan Andersen charged and loaded with the big bomb-pointed harpoon. His was good luck indeed! Good luck to have met the *Ole Bull*; good luck that the cachalot should appear at a time of year when there was no dark night. A little more good luck, and the prize would be his; for the weather was clearing quickly, he man in the crow's-nest had the eyes of a hawk, the sea though swelling was smooth, and he did not doubt his own skill with the gun. Good luck, indeed! He repeated the words aloud.

"It is bad luck, *kaptan*," said the voice of his first-mate behind him. The man, who had just come on deck from his bunk, spoke sadly and respectfully.

Kaptan Andersen wheeled round.

"What is bad luck?" he asked sharply. Then he laughed pleasantly. "You have broken your coffee-mug again, Holar; that is the trouble."

Holar shook his head. He was a big man, looking much older than his years, and melancholy of countenance; often he seemed to be brooding over some tremendous disappointment.

"I have broken nothing, *kaptan*," he said slowly. "Neither have I been dreaming dreams. But I tell you, it is bad luck to get news of a cachalot from Kaptan Bjornsen of the *Ole Bull*."

"So you have heard about the cachalot. Well, Holar, I say to you, that any news of a cachalot, when we have been a week without even a *sej-hval*, is good luck, and when we have killed our cachalot you will all o—"

"*Kaptan*," said the others solemnly, "you will not hunt this cachalot?"

Andersen stared at his mate.

"What foolish talk is this, Holar, about bad luck and Kaptan Bjornsen?" he demanded impatiently. He was sorry for the older man, to whom he had allowed considerable latitude of speech in the past; but this was going too far. "What kind of talk is this from you to me?"

The mate's gloomy gray eyes looked straight into the captain's angry blue ones.

"It is for your sake, *kaptan*, that I speak

what you call foolishness," said Holar quietly. "Will you listen, *kaptan*?"

"What is it?" Andersen rapped out. His eyes were now turned to the sea ahead.

"You have heard," began the mate in a low voice, "that I also was once a *kaptan* of a whaler?"

"I have heard, Holar," said Andersen more gently. "You had bad luck when you were hunting from Finmarken. Was it not so?"

"It was bad luck," continued the mate, "bad luck such as has never happened to a Norsk whaler since old Svend Foyn showed us how to take the great *blaahval* with the bomb-harpoon from the little steamer. My steamer, the *Ulj*, was sunk by a whale that I had struck and made fast."

"I know it, Holar."

"Everyone in Norge knows it, for such a thing never happened before nor since. But every one does not know that the whale—the last whale I hunted—I who have killed hundreds—the whale was a *cacha'ot*."

"Ah!" said Andersen, "I had not heard that."

"It was twelve years ago."

"So you think it is unlucky to strike a cachalot, Holar," said the captain, suppressing a smile. "A goodly number of cachalots have been safely taken since then, and nearly all from the small boats."

"The ill-luck is not in the cachalot, but in the way the cachalot is found. Listen, *kaptan*. Twelve years ago I was cruising for *blaahval* and *finhval* and *nordkappers*, and getting few of any. And on a night such as this, a steamer going to Tromsøe came a little out of her course to tell me about a cachalot—a big bull—that was not four miles away. The steamer was the *Helga*."

"Not the *Ole Bull*," said Andersen, turning to him with a light laugh.

"No. But the *Helga's* *kaptan* was Kaptan Bjornsen, now of the *Ole Bull*."

The captain of the *Gisli* uttered an exclamation. "That is queer, Holar," he admitted presently, "but it means nothing."

"Nothing but bad luck," said the mate stolidly.

"For me?" asked Andersen with a short laugh.



DRAWN BY HOWARD HEATH

"Holar, it is time for you to take the wheel"

"For you, *kaptan*. There is no luck for me now—neither bad nor good," Holar muttered sadly. "But I would not that you should ever be as I. It is not good to be second after one has been first. It is not good to see another fire the gun. It is hell. And so I beg you, *kaptan*, you who have forgiven me much and been patient, to let this cursed—"

"*Hval! hval!*" came the alarm from the man in the crow's-nest.

Kaptan Andersen gave a shout of satisfaction. The whale, however, had risen far away and the chase, in the meantime, would be directed from the mast-head.

"Let him go, *kaptan*, let him go!" the mate pleaded. "Do not risk everything."

Once more Andersen laughed. "It is doubtless the very cachalot that sank the *Ulf*, my good Holar," he said jestingly.

"It is no other," said the mate in a hoarse whisper.

Somehow Andersen did not laugh this

time. He was afraid of no whale in the sea, but he was troubled about his mate. Was the latter getting a little mad?

"It is surely a strange happening," he said after a pause. "But how do you know it is the same cachalot? It is likely that your cachalot died in the Arctic."

"I shot him badly—too near the tail. He got a coil of the cable round his flukes and the cable went snap as if it had been wool. Then he went mad and came for the *Ulf*. *Nej, kaptan*, he lives yet; and there is now a devil in him that entered with my harpoon. Let him go, *kaptan*; let him swim away to the south, to his—"

"How can you tell he is the same?" Andersen interrupted, irritably. "How would you know—"

"On the crown of his great head there is a large whitish blotch. It is like the map of Iceland on the chart—the shape of it."

"Good!" said Andersen. "I will look for it when he comes," he added firmly.

"And you will find it, *kaptan*," returned the other in a dull voice. He perceived that nothing he could say would move the young man from his purpose, and he turned away, for it was time to relieve the man at the wheel.

"Stay!" the captain called, his voice gentle again.

Holar halted.

"See here, my good Holar," said the captain. "Suppose that yonder cachalot is really your old enemy—What then? Has not the day come for your revenge? Think of that, and cheer up!"

"My revenge? What have I to do with it?" asked the mate moodily.

Andersen flushed with anger, and turned again to the gun. It was not his fault that Holar was serving in a secondary position. It had always been a trial, his shipboard relation with a mate old enough to be his father. He had borne with the old man for three seasons, but he was coming to the end of his patience. Holar, with his grievance that insinuated itself into half his conversation, was becoming unbearable.

And now Kaptan Andersen thought he saw through the old man and his cry of "bad luck." The old man had pretended that his anxiety was all for his skipper and his skipper's reputation. So! And what would the old man do if he were suddenly put in the skipper's place? Would he let the cachalot go? Andersen muttered a curse or two, reviling himself for his previous indulgence to his mate. And an ugly question leapt up in his mind: Could he even trust Holar in the steering-box when the *Gisli* and the cachalot came to close quarters?

He looked behind him, but the mate had gone aft. A couple of sailors were standing at their posts beside the winches carrying the cables, to one of which was attached the harpoon. But he did not send a sailor for the mate, as he thought first of doing. The *Gisli* was still far from the cachalot; she was taking a curved course that would eventually, if the lookout's calculations were correct, bring her close and at right angles to the whale's line of progress and somewhat in advance of the whale, there to await his approach. There was, therefore, no immediate need for the gun.

Kaptan Andersen went aft. In the steer-

ing-box he found the second-mate, who informed him that Holar had gone below, promising to return to take charge in a few minutes. At this, Andersen's resentment was not lessened. The old man had taken one liberty too many. What could he be doing below at such a time?

The young man went into the tiny deck-house and quietly descended the narrow stair. At the last step he halted, and peeped into the cabin.

The mate was sitting on his locker, crouching over the table, his face bowed in his arms.

"Holar," said Andersen sternly, "are you asleep? It is time for you to take the wheel."

With a start the mate rose, squeezed past the captain without look or word, and climbed the stair.

Andersen entered the cabin, feeling uneasy. A crumpled, closely and badly written letter was lying on the locker. He picked it up, and ere he knew what he was doing, these words were ringing in his mind:—

"You must not give up hope, dear husband. Would not the young *kaptan*, who is so kind, speak for you to the company?"

Andersen dropped the letter, and sat down on the locker. His wrath died; pity rose again. He began to understand something of what the ex-captain must have suffered during his twelve years' mateship; something of what the old woman at home must have endured as year after year went past without restoring her husband to the position that had seemed so grand to them both. And twelve years without firing a harpoon! Perhaps that appealed to the young gunner more than did anything else in the tragedy. Twelve years' blank on the top of, perhaps, twenty years' full existence, for Holar had been a famous gunner in his day.

Andersen felt sick of himself. He had pitied the old man, but had he ever really done ought to help him? Was he not a nephew of the largest shareholder in the company? Yet he had never spoken a word on Holar's behalf—he, "the young *kaptan* who was so kind."

The second mate summoned him, and he hurried on deck.



DRAWN BY HOWARD HEATH

It was a long shot, but the old man's skill had not departed

"Take the wheel, and send Holar to me," he said briefly, and went forward to the gun. The unsuspecting cachalot, after a long submersion, was coming leisurely towards the *Gisli*, and would most probably cross her bows.

The captain signaled with his hand for "Dead slow."

Presently Holar stood beside him. The old man was trembling.

"You mean to strike him, *kaptan*?" he whispered.

Andersen nodded. "How could I go back to the station and tell them I had let a cachalot go from under my gun? Are you afraid, Holar?"

"For you, *kaptan*. You will lose your ship."

Andersen bit off an oath. The old man's croaking was maddening.

The whale came nearer, and suddenly Holar whispered: "Look! See! the whitish blotch on his head!"

"Ah!" the young man drew a long breath.

He laid his right hand on the stock of the gun, and signaled with his left for a turn ahead. The supreme moment was nigh. Already he saw the *Gisli*, with all her flags and bunting flying, arriving at the Faroe *hvalstation*, with the cachalot in tow; already he heard the managing-director's praise and the congratulations of brother captains.

The mate sighed—the sigh of a man growing old without hope.



Kaptan Andersen stepped from the gun platform.

"Holar," he said rapidly, "I give you charge. Take the gun—and your revenge. I go to take the wheel. Good luck!"

Holar went white as death.

"Are you afraid?" asked the captain.

"Afraid! But I think of you. What will they say at the station?"

"Oh, I have a little accident to my right hand," replied Andersen. "But now I have given you your orders. Quick, Holar! Look out!"

Like a boy Holar sprang to the gun. His face was still ghastly, but his limbs had become steady.

"Holar takes charge," said Andersen to the wondering sailors, and ran aft to the steering-box, there to await the instructions of his mate.

But Holar seemed mate no longer. With the polished stock of the short swivel-cannon on his palm he was *kaptan* in everything but name. The twelve dreary years were blotted out in the joy and exultation of the moment. He signaled his orders without hesitation; he swung his weapon on its bearings with friendly familiarity.

The cachalot appeared to be half-asleep, so lazily did he forge through the water, his head with its peculiar marking showing from time to time.

Suddenly the creature seemed as if it suspected danger. He moved forward with a rush. But ere he could sound Holar's finger had pressed the trigger. It was a long shot, but the old man's skill had not departed, and the hundredweight harpoon buried its four feet length in the great greasy flank. Almost with the crash of the cannon the awful tail whirled aloft, and amid the roaring and foaming of waters the cachalot plunged for the depths.

To the tune of whirring and clanking wheels the yellow hempen cable flashed from the winch and over the bow. Ninety fathoms poured into the sea ere Holar gave orders to check the wheels with the massive wooden brakes; lightly at first, then heavily, until at last the cable ceased to flow, and the *Gisli*, her screw at rest, glided through the water. Between the winch and the bow the cable stretched, taut as a fiddle-string, a foot above the deck. Holar stood with one foot resting

on it, while he sketched the sea ahead.

In seven minutes, perhaps, the cachalot rose. He had gone down with but half-filled lungs, and ere he broke the surface the carbonic gases burst from his blow-hole and carried a watery spout high in the air. Again he blew tremendously and sucked in fresh air, rolling from side to side, lashing out with his tail. The cable slackened ever so little under Holar's foot, but he felt the change, and immediately the donkey-engine went to work. Not for long, however. The cachalot set off once more, towing the *Gisli* at the rate of six knots an hour, and swimming at or near the surface.

In the steering-box Kaptan Andersen felt anxious. It was plain to him that the bomb on the harpoon had failed to explode. A long struggle was, therefore, likely, and it looked as if lancing would be necessary before the end could be reached. He glanced at the two small boats belonging to the *Gisli*, and shrank from the thought of risking his inexperienced men in them alongside an infuriated whale. It was a rare resort, indeed, to use the lance in the rorqual hunting, so rare that little or no provision was made for such an emergency. Andersen remembered that, a year before, three men belonging to an Iceland station had left the whaler to lance a wounded *blaahval* and had not returned. It almost seemed as if the "bad luck" had come after all, and he could only hope that by some happy chance the bomb might yet explode or that Holar, who was already reloading the gun, might somehow get a second shot home.

Two hours had passed, but the cachalot, though slower in his movements, was far from being exhausted. Several times, too, he had just missed getting a kink of cable round his tail, which would have ended matters so far as the company was concerned.

Forwards and backwards ran the wheels as the cable was let out or hauled in, and once the *Gisli* was sent "full astern" to overcome a sudden slackening.

Holar's eyes had become feverishly alert, but the color had not returned to his face. The crisis had yet to come. He knew it. He dared not leave his post for a moment,

otherwise he would have run aft to whisper a single sentence to the captain:

"*Kaplan*, it is for you more than for myself."

Of a sudden the cachalot sounded.

"Steady!" muttered Holar to the men at the winch, who were ready to let out more cable. "Hold on!"

He pressed his foot on the cable—once—twice—thrice.

"Full ahead! Hard astarboard!" he yelled.

Beneath his foot the cable became elastic, then easy to bend.

The deck quivered as the *Gisli* shot for-

ward in a curve, the cable trailing from her port bow as if she were a stricken monster running away with the line.

A groan burst from Kaptan Andersen's throat. Had Holar gone mad? He opened his mouth to shout, when the second-mate at his side screeched and pointed astern.

There, from the shattered sea burst the monstrous head, and, as the men gaped, the cachalot heaved his frightful bulk half out of the water and across the still bubbling track of the *Gisli*.

Down he went again, raising a tempest of spray and leaving a whirlpool of foam. And Holar laughed aloud, for he saw that



DRAWN BY HOWARD HEATH

"Then please look at this," said the mate

the spray and foam were ruddy, and he knew he had beaten his enemy at the game of twelve years ago.

"Stop! Full astern!" he bawled. A minute later the cable was once more safely ahead of the bow. "Stop!" The cable went rigid.

"Half-speed, ahead!"

At the same time the donkey-engine was set to reel in the cable at a moderate pace.

Fifty fathoms away the cachalot came to the surface in a fury, and blew fountains of blood skywards. The bomb had done its work after all.

The *Gisli* crept nearer, and Holar was again at the gun.

The cachalot lashed out madly with his tail. Once he raised it as if to sound, but it fell with a futile thunderclap on the crimson water. He lay still.

The *Gisli* crept nearer. Holar pointed the gun. He wanted to make sure.

Suddenly a convulsion seized the mighty bulk. It rolled over exposing the gaping jaws, the shallow, pointed underjaw with its row of great teeth, the cavernous upper jaw with its empty sockets. Then a shudder, like an earthquake passed over it. Then quietness. A flipper fluttered the surface feebly for a second, and was still.

Holar took his hand from the gun. It was not required. On his side, almost completely submerged, the cachalot lay dead.

"It is enough," murmured Holar, and sat down on the gun-platform, shaking painfully.

"Is he killed?" asked a young sailor, who had never seen a cachalot before. "He still floats." The young sailor was used to rorquals, and they sink immediately after death.

Holar did not appear to hear him, and the young sailor, with a curious look, left him.

Kaptan Andersen came along and laid his hand on his mate's shoulder. Youth is humble once in a while.

"You were right, Holar," he said, "I would have lost my ship."

Thirty-six hours later the cachalot lay on the flensing-slip of the Faroe *hvalstation*. Men were laboring on the carcass with keen curved knives attached to six-

foot handles and sharp spades. Standing in two inches of thick, yellow grease and inhaling an odor beyond description, Holar, the mate, waited impatiently while a couple of men delved deep in the carcass at a spot which he had indicated.

"Have you not found it yet?" he asked.

"Not yet. Ah! here are the barbs!" cried one of the men. "I must get an axe. It is jammed in the ribs."

Holar clambered on to the carcass and peeped into the cavity. He laughed softly, almost boyishly.

The man returned with the ax, and fell to work on the obstruction. Presently he and his fellow hauled forth a harpoon seemingly formed out of rust. They wiped it roughly with some waste.

Holar's eyes glistened. He gave each man a silver coin, and carried his prize towards the little pier against which lay the *Gisli* and another whaler, that had just brought in a fine *blaaahval*.

On his way he met the manager of the station coming from the *Gisli*.

The manager laughed very pleasantly. It was cheerful to have a cachalot and a sixty-barrel Blue on the slip yonder. "What is that you carry, Holar?"

Holar laughed also. "You did not believe this morning when I said I had met the same cachalot long ago."

"Ah, well, Holar, you know I hear so many wonderful stories from my whalers. And I have heard of marks on whales before, too."

The mate rested the barbs of the weapon on the ground and took out his knife. He carefully scraped the rust from the edge of the slotted shaft near its butt.

"Of course you know all the whaling companies' marks," he said quietly, at last. "And you know the mark of the company owning the *Ulfi*, which I—I lost twelve years ago."

The manager nodded, and made a sympathetic remark.

"Then please, look at this," said the mate.

The manager inspected the metal. "Ah, so! It is the mark of your old Finmarken company. It is wonderful! Come with me to the house, Holar, and drink a glass of wine with me, so that I may swallow my unbelieving words of the morning."

They went to the house together. The manager was truly in an extraordinarily gracious humor.

"You have heard that our company is building a new whaler for next season," he remarked, as he poured out wine. "It is perhaps a little early to drink to her

success, but we will do so, and also to the health of her *kaptan*."

"Kaptan Andersen," murmured the mate raising his glass. "He deserves it. The new steamer and Kaptan Andersen. *Skaal!*"

"No, Kaptan Holar," said the manager, holding out his hand.

## The Gift

BY CAROLINE BRETT McLEAN

JUDY folded her work and laid it away for the night, then began to make preparations for what was to her a much more formidable task than the steady twelve or fourteen hours' sewing which comprised her day's work. From the shelf over the table she took down a bottle of ink, a package of cheap paper and envelopes, and with her arms spread out over the table, laboriously began to write. There was a wonderful similarity about the missives Judy wrote when all the inmates of the house were abed. One might have served as a copy for all the others. They all began, "Dear friend father," and ended, "Your loving son, Mr. John Doyle," and the space between the address and the superscription told that the writer now took his pen in hand to write a few lines, and hoped that they would find the recipient well, as the writer was at present, thank God.

Rack her brains as she might, Judy could think of nothing else to say when she was writing. True, when the next day she read them to the delighted recipient, helped by his eager questionings—if Johnny hadn't said this or that—her invention was a little more ready. Judy always read much more from the letters than she put into them.

The letter finished, Judy went down the three long flights of stairs to post it in the box at the corner. As it dropped into the box, she uttered her usual ejaculation for pardon, "The Lord forgi'e for dacavin' the crature like this."

The "crature" was a little old man, whom rheumatism and hard work had crippled and left almost helpless. But he had his good days, when he would sit in

the rocking chair by the window where the sun came in for an hour or two in the afternoon, and talk to Judy as she worked; or silently carve with his pen-knife little wooden figures, likeness to no known animal, for which Judy assured him there was to be found a ready sale in the neighborhood.

"If it plases the crature to think that he can earn a little money with his quare little bastes, 'tis not me that's goin' to tell him diff'rent," Judy said to herself.

Latterly, however, he had not sat by the window so often, and it seemed to Judy that with each day's absence the big chair looked bigger and bigger for him. Wherefore, she sat late at her writing twice or thrice a week, where formerly the task had only to be faced once a fortnight or so. For no matter how bad the pain, the days when the letters came were good days for him.

The letter was delivered by the first mail in the morning, and Judy took it in to him with his cup of tea.

"Another letter. He must spend a dale of his time in writin'," she said handing it to him.

He held it jealously for a moment or two before handing it back to be opened and read.

"Writin' was never no trouble to Johnny. He'd make no more of writin' a letter than we'd make of goin' out the door," he said proudly, and looked at Judy over the edge of his cup, gently impatient with her leisurely breaking open of the envelope. He had received a good many letters since that first most sweet one coming unexpectedly out of the silence of years, but he was as eager to hear this one read as he had been to hear the first.

"He says he's well, and he hopes you're the same," Judy began presently, reading after a fashion of her own, "An'—an'——" she studied the paper closely, "he says he's doin' fine." She paused, at the end of her invention. The father came to her assistance.

"He was always a smart lad, Johnny, and to talk—oh, there was no end to the talk iv him."

"They've made him into marshal iv his town," went on Judy, thus helped. Another pause; then in a burst of inspiration, evoked by some dim comprehension of what the name implied, "Would do you good to see him walkin' at the head of the procession on holidays carryin' the flag, with goold braid a foot wide on the leg iv his pants, and him batin' the drum that proud. I tell ye, he's the boy that's done well for himself."

The father tried to look as if the office bestowed upon Johnny by admiring fellow townsmen was entirely incommensurate with his gifts. He handed the empty cup back to Judy and leaned back on the pillow, a smile on his lips. Looking at him, it suddenly seemed to Judy that he was smaller and slighter than ever she had seen him, as if he had wasted away in the night. Her heart yearned over him.

"Ye wont be tryin' to get up to-day," she said tenderly, "an' maybe there'll be another letter to-morrow. Troth, it's ivery day ye'll be havin' one prisently, I'm thinkin'."

The smile gave place to something wistful.

"He niver says nothin' about comin' home, or mentions where he lives," he said, with a deprecating wistfulness, as of one already abundantly blessed, half-ashamed to ask for more.

Judy looked alarmed. The giving of an address had never seemed to her a necessary concomitant to her letter-writing. And until now the father had never seemed to notice the omission. To hear from Johnny had been sufficient for him. Judy ignored the latter part of his question.

"He's that busy with bein' marshal an' one thing and another that he hasn't much time for goin' places," she said, once more consulting the letter. "He's on the go from mornin' till night."

The smile came back to his face once more at this evidence of the important place Johnny filled in the community.

"He was always the boy for goin' into a thing thorough," he said in apparent contentment.

But as Judy went about the room making things tidy, she caught again that wistful look.

"The crature," she said to herself many times over her work that day, "the crature."

But when, late at night, she sat down to write the letter he would be expecting in the morning, Judy found the writing of it a much more difficult task than any that had preceded it. The usual formula written, she sat wrinkling her brows into innumerable lines in an effort to think of something to say that would bring back the old, unquestioning joy in the mere receiving a letter from Johnny. For a long time the effort was fruitless, and then, while she sat looking up at the ceiling, as if in search of inspiration, her eye fell upon her shabby purse projecting over a corner of the shelf above the table, and the brightness of a great idea flashed across her face. She was wonderfully beforehand this month, and the purse contained a five-dollar bill saved for the rent, which was not due for some days yet. Reaching down the purse, she took out the bill and placed it between the flimsy sheets of paper, then hastily sealed and addressed the envelope. In her eagerness she forgot to add anything more to the letter. She also forgot to utter her usual aspiration for forgiveness as she dropped it into the letter-box, just as the hour of one boomed out from many steeples.

The next morning Judy's countenance betokened an unusual eagerness as the hour for delivery of the mail drew near. The hour came and passed without bringing any letter. Forgetting the lateness of the hour at which she had posted it, Judy was seized with a sudden panic, lest it should have gone astray. The panic was not so much fear of loss of the precious contents, calamitous as such a loss would be to the little household, as fear that her hardly-evolved scheme might be of no avail. He had looked at her so eagerly when she carried in his breakfast, and it



seemed to her that his face had fallen when he saw no letter. Judy's prophecies hitherto, of a letter coming on a certain day, had never failed, and she had predicted that one would come to-day. With the fear in her heart as to the fate of the letter containing the five dollars, Judy could not bring herself to utter any words that might alleviate his disappointment.

But after some anxious hours the letter came. The old man had not been well enough to rise to-day, either. He felt too kind of listless-like, he told Judy, and both had ascribed the listlessness to the sultriness of the late autumn weather. Judy carried the letter into the dusky little room the moment it arrived.

"I tol' you you'd get one to-day," she cried, triumphantly. "An' I wouldn't wonder at all if it isn't something extry that had to be taken great care of. That 'ud account for its being so late."

He smiled happily, his eyes on the envelope which Judy was breaking open as hastily as even he could desire.

"Lord, if there isn't something in it! Money, as sure as you're lyin' there!" she exclaimed. "A dollar bill. A five-dollar bill!" Her voice passed from wonder to incredulity.

He reached out a trembling hand and took the bill from her, and looked at it with something on his face for which Judy could find no name, and which awed her. It was old and flimsy and ragged—emblem of bargain and barter and much that was unlovely, but the father looked at it as if it were some holy thing. For, to his simple mind, it was not only an earnest of the standing his little lad had attained in the community—a tangible evidence of that "doin' fine" on which Judy had insisted; it also spoke with an eloquence beyond the power of any written word, of love and remembrance in the midst of greatness. He gazed at it as if he would never tire.

"His mother would 'a' been proud to-day," he said at last, and looked at Judy with a wavering smile that was touched with radiance. "An' it'll come in handy, too, I guess, eh," he said happily. "I think I'd like to keep it for awhile," he added, after a moment, deprecatingly, and fell to smoothing the bill out lovingly.

Judy laid the letter down on the edge of the bed and went out silently. She welcomed his absorption, for somehow she could not have made up anything to-day.

Judy resumed her work with a feeling of guilt that had heretofore been absent. She had planned to give him happiness, but the pure ecstasy of his look had something awe-inspiring in it, and troubled her as she dwelt upon it.

"He looked for all the world as if he was prayin' to it," she exclaimed, after long cogitation, and then, "God forgi'e me," she cried with fervor.

In the middle of the afternoon an unheard-of thing happened. The postman came again and left a letter bearing many postmarks, and half a dozen addresses in pencil and red ink as places to be "tried." Evidently the postoffice authorities had had difficulty in locating the addressee, but they had located him at last, for the name typewritten upon the envelope was "Mr. Timothy Doyle." Judy was frightened. She turned the envelope up and down and looked at it from this point and that, and wondered and wondered who could have written it, and feared to open it. Letters as often as not contained joyful tidings, but Judy herself had not had a letter for half the length of a lifetime, and the few she had ever received had contained bad news, telling of the deaths of dear ones left behind in the little Irish fishing-village nestling at the foot of the mountain. Wherefore, she looked at the many addressed envelope bodefully, and decided that she would see what was in it before taking it in to the room.

It was very short, and because it was what Judy called "printed," she read it without much difficulty. The paper bore the heading of a jail in a county Judy had never heard of, and the warden told Mr. Timothy Doyle that a man calling himself his son—a tramp serving a sentence for vagrancy—was now lying in the jail infirmary very seriously sick, and was urgent in his desire that his father be notified of his condition.

Judy sat very still after she had read it. Her confused thought was that it was a judgment upon her. For a long time she sat without moving, and then at a step in the hall outside, she sprang up and ran to

the door. The step was that of the "missionary" who looked after the spiritual and material welfare of the dwellers in the tenement. Judy had never had occasion for his ministrations. Material relief she had repelled with the fierce independence of certain of her class; and for spiritual comfort—his faith was not hers, and without knowing it, Judy was unorthodox. She had a vague, wordless belief that God would not be too hard on people of her kind, even if they did not outwardly conform to the rites of religion. But now, in her dismay, she turned to the missionary. Before the situation she herself had created she was helpless; but he was used to dealing with all sorts of trouble, and he might be able to help her.

The "missionary" was a young man, half-saint, half-apostle. Of great gifts, he had chosen this life because to succor God's poor seemed the highest vocation a man could choose. He listened to what Judy had to tell in silence.

"Do you mean to say that you wrote letters and sent money, and told him that they came from his son?" he said, when the faltering tale was done.

Judy began to justify herself.

"Any one wid a heart at all 'ud 'a' done the same. Sure it was fair heart-brakin' to see him longin', longin', for all that he didn't say much, and his eyes follyin' the postman that wistful ivery day. And after Pat Dimpsey, whose Dinny is of an age wid Johnny, came in one day braggin' and boastin' how well Dinny was doin', it was just worse than iver. He'd ne'er a child at all but Johnny, and they was both pretty well up in years when he was born, and he—he thought the sun rose and set on him.

"And the talk iv him, iv the child's cliverness, and what he'd be after makin' of him—a lawyer, if ye plase, or something great like that, and him just the or'narjest boy to people who could see it. And then when he left home without e'er a word to say where he was goin' or when he'd be back, the crature took it to heart, but was hopin' and hopin' all along to hear from him. It was fair heart-br'akin' and him gone to nothing before me eyes." Judy lowered her voice. "It didn't seem right to let him go wid that longin' on him, and

so I wrote the little bits o' letters, thinkin' no harm of it." Her voice was half-defiant.

"But I don't see how you could do it, the postmarks—" he began.

"Sure he couldn't read no more than a baby, an' it was just as aisy desavin' him. God forgi'e me," cried Judy. "'Tis me that's brought more sorrow to him. This'll nigh break his heart after all I been tellin' him," and she wrung her hands.

"He is a near relative—a brother?" questioned the missionary.

Judy opened her eyes. "Why, no, he aint any kin to me," she declared, as if in surprise. "We was all boys an' girls together in Ireland," she explained, "and when the crature's rheumatics got so bad that he couldn't work no more, I couldn't see him go to the poorhouse while I was strong and able to earn his bit." Her tone was apologetic. "He's been the great comp'ny for me," she added.

The missionary was silent. This was only another instance of the divine charity of the poor for those poorer, which was common in his experience, but he could not speak for a moment or two.

"Should you like me to tell him?" he asked at last.

"I'd take it kind," Judy said eagerly. "I daren't take it on meself not to let him know, but you'll know what to say better'n me. He's in here. You'll soften it to him like," she pleaded, with her hand on the door.

A ray of sunlight had struggled into the dark little room. It fell across the old man on the bed. He lay smiling, his face turned to the sunshine.

"God be good to the crature; how happy he looks," Judy murmured from the doorway, pityingly.

The missionary had some medical training in preparing for his vocation. He looked at the old face on which the sunbeam rested like a benediction, noted the crumpled five dollar bill in the hand under his cheek on the pillow—the envelope on the bed, with the address straggling from one corner to the other—and even before he touched the pulseless wrist—he knew.

"To His beloved He giveth sleep," he murmured, with his eyes on the smiling face.



**Parisian Fashion Model XXXIII A**  
**FROM LIFE**

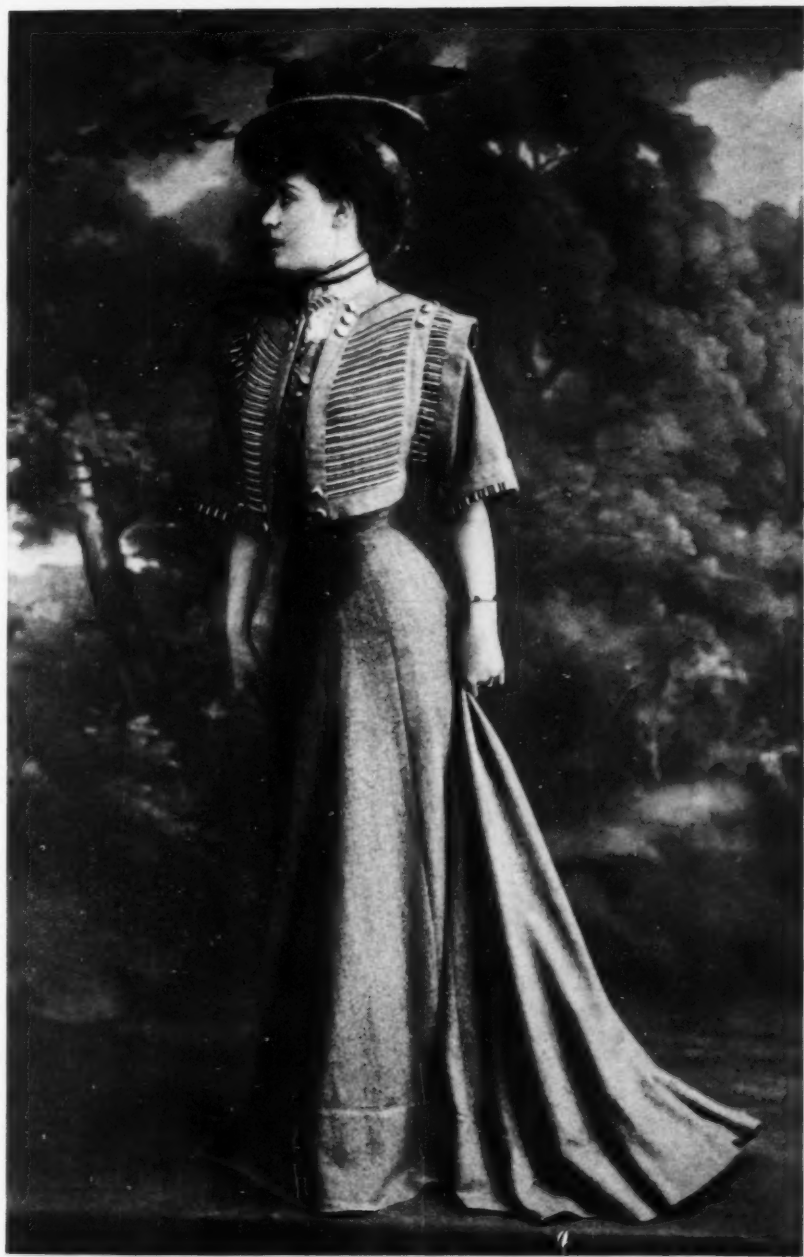
By special contract with Maison Templier Riondeau: - Tailored costume of dark blue. The long  
REUTLINGER, PARIS coat and skirt are trimmed with soutache braid.



**Parisian Fashion Model XXXIV A**  
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By special contract with  
**REUTLINGER, PARIS**

Maison Drécoll:—Tailored costume of black and white plaid. The long loose coat is trimmed with cerise velvet.



**Parisian Fashion Model XXXV A**  
FROM LIFE

By special contract with  
**REUTLINGER, PARIS**

Maison Ney Soeurs:—Afternoon costume of grey cloth. The bolero jacket is trimmed with soutache braid.





**Parisian Fashion Model XXXVI A**  
**FROM LIFE**

By special contract with  
**REUTLINGER, PARIS**

Maison Drécoll.—Automobile coat of light grey Thibet trimmed with thread lace.



**Parisian Fashion Model XXXVIIA**  
FROM LIFE

By special contract with  
**REUTLINGER, PARIS**

Maison Templier Riondeau:—Afternoon costume of green striped satin trimmed with buttons of taffeta. The corsage is trimmed with lace.



**Parisian Fashion Model XXXVIII A**  
**FROM LIFE**

By special contract with Maison Levillon:—Afternoon robe of soft black cloth trimmed with  
**REUTLINGER, PARIS** taffeta buttons; corsage pleated and trimmed with black lace.



**Parisian Fashion Model XXXIX A**  
**FROM LIFE**

By special contract with  
**REUTLINGER, PARIS**

Maison Drécoll:—Evening coat of serge.



**Parisian Fashion Model XL A**  
**FROM LIFE**

By special contract with  
**REUTLINGER, PARIS**

Maison Redfern:—Tailored costume of black and white pin check cloth  
trimmed with black.





PHOTO BY LANDS & BRADY

E. H. Sothern



PHOTO BY SARONY

Madge Carr Cook

Between *Romeo* as conceived by William Shakespeare and played by E. H. Sothern; and *Mrs. Wiggs* as created by Mrs. Rice and impersonated by Madge Carr Cook, the London public preferred *Mrs. Wiggs*

## A Dramatic Invasion

BY LOUIS V. DE FOE

LONDON, AUGUST 1, 1907.

THE American visitor in England during the London dramatic season, which begins after Easter and continues until July, if he be a patron of the stage at home, has had better reason this year than at any time in the past to feel that he is on native ground. Wherever in London his wandering steps have led he has met the evidences of a Yankee actor-invasion.

In a dozen spots at night, as he strolls through the winding streets of the West End, glittering electric-signs above fashionable playhouse entrances spell names that are familiar to him. By day, long processions of "Sandwich-men"—melancholy flotsam and jetsam of a cruelly over-crowded city—trudge wearily beside the curbing, bearing on their chests and backs and poised upon their shoulders legends that he has read before.

The buses and trams are plastered with placards that have no novelty. Well-known faces look out from the pages of the illus-

trated periodicals. The dramatic columns of the newspapers are filled with comments upon plays about which he has already formed his own opinions.

As he walks through the Strand, in Shaftsbury Avenue, or in any of the other much frequented thoroughfares that radiate like spokes of a wheel from the busy hub called Piccadilly Circus, he finds groups of smoothly shaven men whose faces he recalls, lounging around restaurant and café doors. It is almost as if Upper Broadway had emptied itself into London and the theatrical machinery of America had shifted its grind to England.

This has been the first year of an actual theatrical reciprocity between the two nations. Since the beginnings of the theater in America we have leaned heavily upon the drama of England. The British classics we have claimed as our own by right of legacy. English players we have received and honored as a matter of course. In all things affecting the art of

the stage the younger nation has relied upon its parent.

But England, meanwhile, has done little to encourage the purely American drama. From time to time it has received our prominent stars, but generally with chilling indifference. Productions of our plays with English actors in the characters have been either sporadic or accidental. America has found it difficult to gain a foothold in the English theater or in the interests of the English theatergoer.

The cause that has led up to the recent English change of front is that the business of theatrical production in London has exceeded the supply of dramatic material. As in New York, theater-building has been greatly overdone. The pinch in the market of theatrical art has also come at a time when English authors seem to have written themselves out or have adopted a habit of disposing of their manuscripts for first production in American theaters.

Charles Frohman, whose operations as a theater-manager in London are nearly as extensive as in America, has been mainly responsible for opening this new English avenue for American dramatists and actors. More than half of the prominent stars of England are under contract to him. He also controls many stages. Under the present difficulty of finding material he has

naturally drawn upon his American supply.

Nine American dramas have already been produced in London this season under his auspices, some with American and some with English casts. Nearly as many more plays have been sent across the sea by the competitive theatrical powers that make their headquarters in New York. The result has been that American dramatic art has played a conspicuous part throughout the London season.

I wish I might add that this American invasion of the English theaters has been as successful as it has been energetic. Vagaries of American press-agents had led me to believe that all the plays and players that had bidden for London's patronage had been received with affectionate interest. Arriving on the ground I find that, out of the whole list, there have been only three or four real American successes.

Though the plays we have sent across the Atlantic were chosen be-

cause of their wide popularity at home, it does not follow that England is more competent than we to discover flaws either in our authors or actors. Plays of English life that meet with great favor in London are usually equally successful in America, for the reason that our audiences have a generally thorough understanding of English social conditions. Among recent exam-



PHOTO BY WHITE

Grace George, as *Cyprienne*  
She is one of the few "American" successes of the present London season

ples we understood and enjoyed Arthur Wing Pinero's study of feminine character in "His House in Order," although *Nina Jesson* was set in surroundings of English life. We appreciated Henry Arthur Jones' satirical thrusts at the narrow hypocrisies of English village-life in "The Hypocrites." We soon learned to revel in J. M. Barrie's "Peter Pan," because it struck deeply into the inner meanings of child life. The evils of aristocratic society, exposed by Alfred Sutro in "The Walls of Jericho," were no closed book to us.

On the other hand, the average English theatergoer knows little and cares less for conditions of life peculiar to the American at home. He reads his newspaper mainly for the sake of the proceedings of the House of Commons and the Court Calendar. His editors do not give him even a clear understanding of American public affairs. With insular complacency his vision is bounded by the limits of his domain, and his ruling impulse is first to take care of his own.

It is this inborn insularity and not, as many claim, a prejudice against American authors or actors that has caused the failures of so many of our American dramas in London this year. The great success won by Miss Marie Tempest in Clyde Fitch's comedy, "The Truth," despite its

failure in America, proves that the English theatergoer, as far as he is able to comprehend us, is generously appreciative of us. Incidentally, the play would have met with a different fate at home had it been as well acted or produced in the same form as it was put upon the London stage.

Toward American plays that appeal directly to their curiosity, English audiences have been equally cordial. *Mr. Stubbins*, *Miss Hazy*, *Mrs. Wiggs*, and all the little *Wiggesses* in the inimitable "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch," as acted by a New York company headed by Mrs. Madge Carr Cook and Miss Louise Closser, have proved an unending source of delight. The run of this strongly localized comedy of American life at Terry's Theater in the Strand has been one of the greatest features of the London season, and its success will lead to a production of "Way Down East" next season and a possible onslaught upon England of what a New York



PHOTO BY SARONY

Robert Edson as *Strongheart*

The London public refused to believe that he was not a "real" Indian

dramatic critic has humorously termed the "American b'gosh drama."

Another great success from the western shores of the Atlantic has been won by an English company in "Brewster's Millions," the ingenious farce dramatized by Winchell Smith from George Barr McCutcheon's novel, which had an equally popular run in New York before Charles Frohman

risked it for London production. Its central idea of an American in a quandary how to get rid of a fortune of \$1,000,000 legitimately in a year has been considered an irresistible delight, in spite of the loose, haphazard construction of the piece. It is an example of amusing foolery that needs no comprehension of American character to make it clear.

The last and most recent of the American successes has gone to Miss Grace George and her American company in "Divorçons." With the subject of the Sardou play London was already familiar, if not with the American vernacular of Miss Margaret Mayo's translation. So English audiences were free to sit back in undistracted contemplation of Miss George's acting, and it quickly arrived at the verdict that her innate womanliness and gentleness, in spite of her lack of great distinction or a definite acting-method, was altogether delightful. Consequently, Miss George will appear hereafter regularly for short engagements during the London season. Her cropper will be delayed until she acts a rôle which the English do not thoroughly understand.

The surprise of the London season, so far as it affects the American theatrical invasion, has been the reported financial losses that followed the first English engagement of America's foremost poetic actress, Miss Julia Marlowe, and her talented co-star, Mr. E. H. Sothern. With the prestige of great reputations at home they failed to appeal to English playgoers even in a *répertoire* of English classics and standard Continental dramas. Though their artistic success was absolute and critical opinion cordial, almost without dissent, the public doggedly shunned the box-office.

But, as in every other instance of American failure this year, the reason is easy to discover. Extravagant press-agent methods probably accomplished the downfall of the Marlowe-Sothern experiment. English conservatism frowns upon sensational methods of self-exploitation. It stood amazed at two artists of supposedly established reputations in America who hired motor-cars for the convenience of "sandwich-men," sat in theater-pits to study the tastes of occupants of the stalls, crammed

the London dailies with extravagant stories about themselves and their experiences, and published reports that President Roosevelt had sent flowers from Washington to grace their *débuts*.

It is unlikely that either Miss Marlowe or Mr. Sothern was directly implicated in these absurd schemes of advertisement that are commonly practiced by press-agents in America. Nevertheless, the responsibility rested indirectly with them, and the result was that they were cheapened in the public estimation before they gained an opportunity to establish a claim to serious consideration.

The utter collapse of "Strongheart," after two years of American favor, is one of the strongest proofs of London's insular ignorance of social conditions in America. The failure of the play, in spite of his own personal success as its Indian hero, was a bitter disappointment to Mr. Robert Edeson, who had counted strongly upon it for a favorable *début* in England.

"Strongheart" went to its doom because England will brook no system of football other than its own Rugby game, and because it cannot comprehend the status of the Indian in polite American society. These seem to be trivial reasons for the failure of a work of dramatic art but, nevertheless, they are correct.

It will be remembered that *Strongheart*, the Indian hero of William C. DeMille's comedy, is a student in Columbia University, a great athlete, and a favorite among his fellows. On the eve of a great football game he allows a wrong suspicion of treachery to rest upon himself rather than shift it to the captain of his team and thus risk losing the contest.

Yet, later, when he aspires to marry a sister of the friend he has shielded, after his chivalrous and high-minded nature has been proved, his ambition to become the husband of a white woman causes both resentment and disgust. The *dénouement* is that *Strongheart*, who is a great chief's son, returns to his people and their customs, renouncing the civilization that has refused to accept him as its social equal.

Racial prejudice has lost its bitterness in England. The yellow-skinned East Indian is no longer the ward of the Briton, but his brother. Why then is not the edu-



PHOTO BY HALL

E. H. Sothern and Julia Marlowe in "Romeo and Juliet." Critical London commended while all the rest stayed away from the playhouse—due to the over-activity of American press-agents.

cated American Indian qualified to wed the sister of his college chum? English notions demanded a happier ending for the drama. "Why didn't the Indian marry the girl?" became a byword in the cafés that will survive longer than even memories of the play.

How little London in the past has kept in touch with the dramatic stage in America is proved by the fact that throughout the four weeks' struggle of "Strongheart" a quite general impression prevailed that

Mr. Edeson, the star, was actually an Indian. I venture that there is no star on the English stage of Mr. Edeson's prominence who could be made, in America, the victim of so ludicrous a mistake.

Unless Augustus Thomas' comedy, "The Earl of Pawtucket," catches the fancy of the English to a degree now quite unexpected for it, Clyde Fitch will emerge from the London season with twice the prestige of any other American dramatist. The popularity of "The Truth" alone



has been sufficient to place him far in the lead, but still another of his plays, "*Toddles*," acted by Cyril Maude and his London company, has been running brilliantly since early last fall.

"*Toddles*" has not yet been seen in America. As it will be brought to New York in the autumn with Joseph Coyne in its title part, a description of it should be left for the next issue of *THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE* in which I shall deal with the London plays which will be produced during our coming season. But it has also been no less a factor in the present London invasion, and surely it has helped to strengthen England's opinion of the humorous resources of American writers.

It is scarcely necessary to glance at the playbill to detect the familiar hand of Mr. Fitch in the making of the piece. Its story is told with all his keen insight into feminine nature, and most of the characters are drawn with a deliciously humorous twist. Its genesis is "Tripplepoete," a French play by Tristan Bernard and André Godferneau. But in adapting it Mr. Fitch has made it almost wholly his own and has stocked it with droll lines in an amusing and typically American vernacular.

Nevertheless, it is not a very creditable example of construction. The first act is obviously explanatory and devised merely as an avenue to a series of capital situations in the second and third. The fun after that soon dwindles, and the story ends with a forced and stupid curtain-scene.

*Toddles*, otherwise Lord Meadows, is a harmlessly impecunious and vapid English aristocrat, a hopeless hypochondriac, and given to the practice of conquering all troubles by avoiding them. His single aim in life is to make his purse meet the emergencies of his expenditures. While taking a cure for imaginary ills at a French watering-place and wavering before the attractions of a dashing widow, he is delivered by his aunt into the clutches of *Mrs. Joblyn*, a vulgarian social "climber" who covets *Lord Meadows'* title for her marriageable daughter and who has a rich old fossil for a father who is willing to pay the price.

*Toddles* does not much care which way

the wheel of the marriage-lottery turns, so long as it wins a money prize, but he is somewhat at a loss how to side-track his cousin, the *Countess de Chambry*, whose five-years' old daughter, *Cicely*, he has half-promised to marry as soon as she grows up. Nevertheless, the snare laid by his aunt, *Lady Daver*, and *Mrs. Joblyn* is too clever for him to avoid, and he allows himself to be drawn into one of the latter's pretentious and stupid "at homes" in her Paris house.

"We must put our heads together in this matter," says *Lady Daver*, as the plot to snare *Toddles* is being hatched.

"Yes," answers the overdressed *Mrs. Joblyn*, "but, my dear, we must look out for our hats."

Could a scrap of humorous dialogue more typically Fitchian be imagined?

The antiquated *Mr. Joblyn* has no interest whatever in his wife's ambitious social entertainments. They disturb his cat-naps after dinner and mar his serenity of mind. So he is in the habit of popping out of his bedroom, waylaying *Mrs. Joblyn's* guests, condoling with them for being obliged to come to her parties, and advising them "to go right back home and get a good night's rest."

When *Toddles* arrives at the party, much out of spirits, old *Joblyn* waylays him, offers him heartfelt sympathy and shows him a way of escape through the garden gate. But he is caught, brought back, and delivered body, soul, and title, to the blonde *Joblyn* heiress.

The next act is the noon of *Toddles'* wedding-day with the victim in bed in his Paris flat. His disinclination has developed into a positive repugnance to the marriage-arrangements. His only yearnings are for a dose of bicarbonate of soda and a chance to go to sleep. But his trunks have been sent to the railroad-station and his wedding-finery has been aired and laid out.

One by one his friends call to encourage him and put strength in his drooping spirits. Matrimony, they tell him, is not the greatest of human burdens—and think of the money settlement! Still *Toddles* demurs and rolls himself up in the blankets. Even *Mrs. Joblyn* puts in an appearance to cheer her prospective son-in-law for the coming ordeal. It is in this scene that



PHOTO BY BYRON

Madge Carr Cook in "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch"  
 London believes this to be an accurate picture of American life, hence the great  
 success of play and actors

Mr. Fitch's ingenuity and humorous propensities are shown at their best.

Eventually *Toddles* is persuaded to take his morning-bath and, during this operation, the countess and her smug five-year-old, boiling with wrath at his escape, put in an appearance and steal his clothes. Marriage, owing to this unexpected hand of Providence, seems now impossible, and the act ends with *Toddles* in a hilarious pajama-dance in his bedroom.

In the next scene, all the *Joblyn* guests are collected at the mayor's office for the civil ceremony, much excited at *Toddles'* non-appearance. Here Mr. Fitch again convulses his audiences with the amusing gossip among his characters. Eventually

*Toddles*, still in his pajamas, but wrapped in a motoring-coat, is dragged in, the service proceeds, and all hands set out for the railroad-station.

From this point the play quickly dwindles out. *Toddles* and *Miss Joblyn* break off the match but, shortly afterwards, getting together on confidential terms for the first time, they discover mutual attractions which lead to a new betrothal on a basis of real affection. They leave on the bridal-tour with the guests none the wiser for the new state of affairs, *Toddles*, meanwhile, having borrowed the clothes of one of his friends.

If the last act of the piece is revised and brought up to the standard of what pre-



PHOTO BY WHITE

The Big Scene in "Strongheart"

Because England knows only its Rugby football and refuses to be enlightened concerning the game as played in America, this scene in "Strongheart" was condemned by the London critics

cedes, there is little doubt that it will find popularity in America. There is also danger that it will not be acted as well as by Mr. Maude, who is a comedian of uncommonly fertile resources. With his help, Mr. Fitch has succeeded in keeping London in laughter for several months, and has much strengthened, in English estimation, the comic-ability of our playwrights.

Cyril Maude has planned to follow "Toddles" with Augustus Thomas' "The Earl of Pawtucket," which has been played several seasons in the United States by Lawrence D'Orsay. The farce is undoubtedly cleverly written, but it is by no means likely that its hero, who is an exaggerated type of the British swell, will impress English theatergoers as being as amusing as he was regarded in America. However, it will add another to the long list of plays by American dramatists that have suddenly come to the English theaters.

London may not understand the conditions of American life which are the foundation of our native plays. It ridicules our accents and our mannerisms. It undoubtedly is amusingly slow in grasping our humor.

But the genuine hospitality in private life and the forbearance with which it has received the authors and actors who have taken part in our first real dramatic invasion of London prove that at least it bears us no prejudice or ill-will. Several of our American plays have been hopeless from the English point of view, and a few have been poor examples of our dramatic art. If, collectively, they have not reached the success before English audiences to which, it seems to me, they were entitled, they have at least paved the way to a better acquaintance with our stage. The invasion by our theatrical companies will go on and, some day, the reciprocity between the stages of the two nations may be thoroughly established.